

Ohio PERS NEWS

YOUR BENEFIT CONNECTION

News and information for retired members of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System

Special health care section enclosed



OPERS pension and health care funds reach \$77.6 billion in 2006

OPERS recently announced that the trust funds, providing both pension benefits and health care coverage to retirees, grew by \$8.4 billion in 2006. Preliminary investments results for the fiscal year ending Dec. 31, 2006, show that the OPERS pension fund increased to \$64.8 billion, and the fund that provides health care coverage reached \$12.8 billion.

93 cents is now set aside to meet those obligations. That increase compares to 89 cents for every \$1 of obligations (89 percent prefunded) in 2005.

Jennifer C. Hom, director of investments, said, "Our disciplined long-term investment strategy benefited from strong gains in both the domestic and international equity markets as well as the liquidity boom in the alternative asset classes." She added, "The result was \$7.5 billion being added to our pension fund and \$900 million added to our health care fund."

OPERS pension and health care funds reach \$77.6 billion

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The OPERS pension fund earned a 15 percent return on investments during 2006 compared to 9.25 percent in 2005. These earnings outpaced our targeted actuarial return rate of 8 percent for the pension fund.

The 2006 preliminary investment results show the OPERS pension fund is now 93 percent prefunded, meaning that for every \$1 of pension liability,

Read more about the significance of these results to our health care fund on page 7 within our special health care section.

OPERS pension and health care funds

continued on page 2



Ohio PERS NEWS – Your Benefit Connection is a quarterly newsletter providing news and information to more than 150,000 age and service retirees, disability benefit recipients and survivor benefit recipients of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System. This publication allows us to communicate vital information concerning retirement benefits and health care coverage to our retirees and also educate them on the services we provide.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

www.opers.org
1-800-222-7377

This newsletter is written in plain language for use by members of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System. It is not intended as a substitute for the federal or state law, namely the Ohio Revised Code, the Ohio Administrative Code, or the Internal Revenue Code, nor will its interpretation prevail should a conflict arise between it and the Ohio Revised Code, Ohio Administrative Code, or Internal Revenue Code. Rules governing the retirement system are subject to change periodically either by statute of the Ohio General Assembly, regulation of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement Board, or regulation of the Internal Revenue Code. If you have questions about this material, please contact our office or seek legal advice from your attorney.

OPERS board responds to public pension critics

In recent weeks, several Ohio newspapers have printed articles comparing the pension benefits of public employees to those of workers in the private sector. The stories have been critical of public pensions, claiming that public employees are retiring younger with larger pensions at taxpayer expense. These articles have drawn conclusions based on misinformation and confused readers by over-simplifying what is very complex subject matter.



Ken Thomas

In an effort to clarify the misconceptions perpetuated by these articles and educate readers about how public pension programs actually support the state economy, Ken Thomas, municipal employees representative and chair of the OPERS



Cinthia Sledz

board and Cinthia Sledz, miscellaneous employees representative and vice chair, have written an editorial letter that we have distributed widely to Ohio newspapers.

We have printed the letter on pages 3 and 4 to alleviate any concerns or confusion created by these recent newspaper articles.

OPERS pension and health care funds *continued from page 1*

Hom said 2006 marks the fourth consecutive year that the investment program has had strong returns. The OPERS fund earned a return of 25.3 percent in 2003, 12.5 percent in 2004 and just over nine percent in 2005.

OPERS Investment Results 2006/2005		
	As of Dec. 31, 2006	As of Dec. 31, 2005
OPERS total assets	\$77.6 billion	\$69.2 billion
OPERS pension fund (defined benefit)	\$64.8 billion	\$57.3 billion
OPERS health care fund	\$12.8 billion	\$11.9 billion
Investment return (pension)	15 percent	9.25 percent
Investment return (health care)	12.8 percent	8 percent



Ohio Public Employees Retirement System

Dear Editor:

Several Ohio newspapers have taken a close look at various aspects of state pension systems and have compared public and private pension benefits. But as is often the case with complex subject matter, misconception and confusion can creep in. The Board of Trustees of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS), the state's largest pension system, welcomes the opportunity to explain how its public workers in Ohio earn their pensions and how pension programs support the state's economy.

We would like to take a moment to clarify misconceptions related in recent stories.

Misconception: Taxpayers pay the majority of the cost of pension benefits.

Fact: Nationally, employer (taxpayer) contributions to public pensions comprise only one-fourth of pension revenue, according to the National Association of State Retirement Administrators (NASRA). OPERS mirrored those statistics exactly in 2006 with assets growing by \$8.4 billion, three-fourths of that due to robust investment earnings. In addition, public employees are required to put 9.5 percent of their pay into their OPERS pensions.

Misconception: Pension systems are a strain on Ohio's economy.

Fact: On the contrary, by prudently managing the retirement system and providing a pension for former public servants, OPERS is helping Ohio avoid the costs for welfare and Medicaid. NASRA reports that most public pension systems have recovered from the devastating investment years of 2000-2002 and, on average, have assets to cover almost 90 percent of their pension liabilities. OPERS, which prefunds its pension and health care accounts, now has 93 cents set aside for every dollar of pension obligation. That's up more than 4 percent over last year alone. In 2006, OPERS paid out \$4.4 billion in pensions and health care to more than 200,000 retired Ohioans and beneficiaries. Ninety-one percent of retirees live in Ohio, thereby pouring most of that money back into the Ohio economy in the form of purchased goods and services. For every \$1 of taxpayer contribution to the pension system, investments and employee contributions plus other sources of revenue return \$2.58 back into the Ohio economy. In addition, OPERS' Ohio-Midwest Fund invests in high quality private equity funds that focus, in whole or in part, on making investments in the Ohio and Midwest regions that so far have favorably impacted 1,375 jobs.

Misconception: Public pension benefits far exceed retirement benefits in the private sector.

Fact: By law, public employees in Ohio do not receive Social Security. OPERS IS the Social Security system for public employees and was established by the state legislature before Social Security was created. Unlike the private sector, public workers don't get stock options, incentive compensation and other amenities often associated with the private sector. Without OPERS, most public workers would have no retirement program. According to NASRA, salaries of public workers have historically trailed their colleagues in the private sector by wide margins. Retirement programs are sometimes the only incentive to attract and retain workers for essential public services.



Misconception: Retirees receiving public pensions pay little or nothing for health care while such benefits in the private sector are disappearing.

Fact: No one can argue that double-digit health care cost inflation is a national crisis. But while many companies in the private sector have chosen to funnel profits toward executive compensation and shoring up stock prices, OPERS has been investing in a health care trust fund since 1974 to pay for the health care of current and future retirees. OPERS' prefunded health care fund stands at almost \$13 billion. Through prudent investments and careful cost management, OPERS directed more of its returns into its health care fund last year than it paid out for retiree health care. Last year alone, OPERS extended the solvency of its health care fund by four years to an impressive 22 years, a figure that a recent industry report hailed as one of the best funding levels in the nation. And contrary to newspaper accounts, public employees are shouldering the burden of increased health care costs, too. Three years ago, the OPERS Board of Trustees enacted a multi-faceted Health Care Preservation Program for retirees. As part of the program, future OPERS retirees will pay a greater percentage of their health care costs depending on service and retirement date. This is a significant change from previous years. The OPERS board regularly examines the health care program to ensure the program is consistent with funding levels.

Misconception: Public employees who retire and are rehired or reelected to public sector positions are getting big salaries and fat retirement checks.

Fact: Permitting persons to draw a pension and return to public employment is permitted by law in Ohio. OPERS is required by law to administer the program. But far from the impression left by newspapers that focus on the few exceptional cases, 2 out of 3 rehired public employees earn \$20,000 or less per year. More than half return as part-time employees who may be working out of necessity or because there is an urgent need for their services. We stand ready to work with the General Assembly to make changes to address concerns about this policy.

Like most pension systems, OPERS has its share of challenges. Baby boomers will swell pension ranks, and health care costs will continue to rise. But Ohio taxpayers can take comfort in knowing that its pension system for public employees, barring a dramatic downturn in the economy or a national catastrophe, has the ability to meet future obligations. OPERS should not be criticized for investment returns that consistently beat benchmarks, thereby keeping taxpayer contributions low while pouring billions into the Ohio economy. It is not in the public interest to criticize the strength of OPERS that, through prudent investments and sound practices, provides public workers with a safe and secure retirement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Thomas".

Ken Thomas, chair

Ohio Public Employees Retirement System

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cynthia Sledz".

Cynthia Sledz, vice chair

Ohio Public Employees Retirement System

Ohio PERS health care

OPERS INTRODUCES HEALTHY LIVING/HEALTHY RETIREMENT

In a recent survey, our retirees expressed their willingness and desire to engage in more healthy lifestyles. They also told us that financial incentives and/or rewards were the preferred way they would like to be recognized for their actions. Responding to that feedback, OPERS is developing a wellness incentive program for our retirees and their covered spouses. We feel this is one way we can support our benefit recipients and help them to enjoy the best possible quality of life in retirement.

We all know that we should eat healthy foods, exercise and avoid tobacco products. Getting preventative tests at recommended intervals is also something we should do. At the same time, changing habits can be difficult. OPERS is dedicated to supporting retirees covered by our health plan in changing to and/or maintaining healthier lifestyles, and believes that everyone stands to be a winner with our new Healthy Living/ Healthy Retirement wellness programs.

The OPERS Board recently approved several components of the program. Starting this fall, all non-Medicare OPERS retirees will have the opportunity to participate, and the program will be expanded to include Medicare-eligible retirees early in 2008.

Why a wellness incentive program?

The motivation behind Healthy Living/Healthy Retirement is as simple as 1-2-3:

- 1) A person's choices affect his or her health, whether in the short term, the long term, or both.
- 2) Anything that affects the health of our retirees also affects how fast they, or OPERS, spend health care dollars.
- 3) Any steps we take to maintain or improve the health of our retirees today also improves the "health" of our health care fund tomorrow.

The idea of financial rewards is not new to insurance, though it is new to health care insurance. When you insure your car, it makes sense that things like wearing your seat belt or driving sensibly and avoiding tickets are rewarded. Likewise, carelessness, causing accidents, or moving violations result in higher costs for you. We want to reward the behaviors that help hold down costs, and hold our retirees accountable for the obvious unhealthy choices they make.

Healthy Living/Healthy Retirement *continued on page 8*



Aetna health care plan participants must use 2007 ID cards

If you are currently an Aetna health care plan participant, you should have received a new 2007 Aetna identification card earlier this year. Please be sure that your providers have a copy of your 2007 Aetna identification card. You can identify your 2007 identification card by the group number listed on your card. The new (2007) group number 619351. The outdated cards will have a group number of 351631.

If your claims are submitted with the incorrect identification number after 5/1/07, they will be denied until you provide the new number. If you or your provider receive a letter stating that you do not have coverage, you will need to verify that your provider has a copy of your 2007 identification card or your correct identification number. If you need help verifying that you are using the most current identification card, please contact Aetna at 1-800-645-5677.

An additional note about health care plan identification cards:

Each year brings more documented cases of **health care identity theft**. In these cases, thieves gain access to someone's personal information, including their health plan identification numbers, and use this information to receive medical care and procedures under that person's name and insurance coverage.

Health plan administrators feel the best way to protect yourself from this type of fraud is to ask your medical providers to require a photo ID at the time of service. It is also recommended you keep your health plan ID cards in a secure location as if they were a credit card or an important financial document.

Important information regarding rule amendment

The following is important information for those OPERS retirees whose spouses are retired or eligible for retirement with health care benefits through another Ohio retirement system.

OPERS Administrative Code 145-4-13 was amended effective January 1, 2007. This amendment provided that OPERS would no longer allow spouses to waive health care coverage under another Ohio retirement system in order to be covered as dependents under the OPERS Health Care Plan. This rule has been amended again to provide a limited period of time during which an OPERS retiree may enroll their spouse in the OPERS Health Care Plan despite the health care coverage available to that spouse from another Ohio system. This amendment was effective on April 6, 2007, and has very specific eligibility requirements.

In order for a spouse, who is retired or eligible for retirement with health benefits through another Ohio retirement system, to be eligible for primary coverage in the OPERS Health Care Plan, **all** of the following must apply:

- 1) The OPERS member was eligible to retire on or before January 1, 2007.
- 2) The OPERS member retires with an effective benefit date on or before December 1, 2007.
- 3) The eligible dependent retires from his or her other retirement system on or before December 1, 2007.
- 4) The OPERS member enrolls the eligible dependent in OPERS health care coverage before January 1, 2008.

Investment earnings and plan changes extend health care solvency

As announced on page 1, preliminary investments results for the fiscal year ending Dec. 31, 2006 show that the funds set aside to fund retiree health care coverage have reached \$12.8 billion. This represents a \$900 million dollar increase from the fund's 2005 balance of \$11.9 billion. The health care fund earned a 12.8 percent return on investments in 2006 compared to 8 percent in 2005.

Our disciplined long-term investment strategy, recent changes to our health care plan and constant efforts to maximize the dollars in our health care fund are currently allowing the fund to keep pace with these growing costs.

These positive investment results, our focused program to preserve health care, and revised actuarial data added four years of solvency to the OPERS health care fund, thereby extending the health care fund's solvency period to 22 years. The fund's solvency period is the number of years the fund will have assets to provide health care coverage for our benefit recipients and their beneficiaries.

The current 22-year solvency period is well within the rolling 15- to 25-year solvency window established by the OPERS Board of Trustees under the Health Care Preservation Plan adopted in 2004.

As predicted, the cost of providing retirement benefits and health care coverage continues to grow each year. OPERS paid out approximately \$4.1 billion in retirement and health care in 2006 to more than 200,000 retired workers and beneficiaries, compared to \$3.8 billion to approximately 152,000 retirees and beneficiaries in 2005.

Our disciplined long-term investment strategy, recent changes to our health care plan and constant efforts to maximize the dollars in our health care fund are currently allowing the fund to keep pace with these growing costs.

Chris DeRose, OPERS executive director, said the strong investment returns and increased solvency period are good news for OPERS retirees and their beneficiaries.

"We continue to substantially prefund our retiree health care coverage program," DeRose said. "While new federal accounting rules this year will draw attention to unfunded liabilities at systems across the U.S. with respect to health care, OPERS' members and retirees can take comfort in knowing that their health care program is one of the most fiscally sound in the country."

NEW MEDICAL PLAN DESCRIPTION AVAILABLE ONLINE

We have posted an updated Medical Plan Description (MPD) on our Web site, www.opers.org. The new MPD is a document that includes a plan description for those OPERS Health Care Plan participants covered under both Aetna and Medical Mutual of Ohio. From our Web site home page, choose the "Health Care" option listed under the "Retirees" heading. The new MPD booklet is located under the "Tools and Resources" section on the "Health Care" main page.



Healthy Living/Healthy Retirement *continued from page 5*

The wellness/illness health care line

Think of your own health as being somewhere on a line, with the best health you can have at one end, and being very unhealthy at the other. Healthy Living/Healthy Retirement is designed to keep our retirees on the healthy end. Staying on the “healthy” side for the majority of life means the best quality of life for our retirees. It also eases the strain on our health care fund.

It's also important to realize that just because someone has moved toward the “unhealthy” right side, it does not mean they need to stay there. Our goal, through Healthy Living/Healthy Retirement, is to find ways to help all of our retirees move to the left on this line, regardless of where they start.

calls from the wellness coach during the program year, however retirees can make an unlimited number of calls to their coaches. Each enrolled retiree will set individualized goals with their coach. The confidential Personal Health Assessment is repeated annually. No individual results will be reported to OPERS, but we will hear how the group did as a whole.

The OPERS Healthy Living / Healthy Retirement Program will offer an incentive of up to a \$100 value as a way to thank retirees for participation in the coaching program. Coaches will work with retirees exhibiting any one (or more) of several risk factors, all things that the retiree can help control by making healthy choices.



Wellness coaching for non-Medicare retirees

This fall, all non-Medicare retirees will receive a Personal Health Assessment (PHA) from a company chosen by OPERS that specializes in wellness programs. The PHA is a form that asks questions about the retiree's current health behaviors. Some important facts:

- All information is confidential. OPERS cannot get your responses, only the health coaches who must abide by strict federal privacy standards.
- Participation in the wellness coaching program is completely voluntary.
- There is no penalty if a retiree decides not to complete the questionnaire.

Once a retiree completes the confidential PHA and risk factors are identified, he or she will be offered a coaching program. The program is set up to include four 'coaching'

Retirees who complete a confidential PHA and have no health risk factors identified, or who are unable to complete the coaching sessions, will be able to receive the incentive by receiving a preventive test or other preventive service verified by OPERS. Retirees who are unable to complete either program (due to physical or mental illness) will be able to receive an incentive when they provide information from their physicians confirming their inability to participate.

Retirees already coping with a chronic condition or illness

The OPERS Disease Management program, currently administered by Life Masters, will still be available for those retirees already coping with a chronic disease or condition. The incentive will still be available to those who work to improve their health with Life Masters during the year.

Healthy Living/Healthy Retirement
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Healthy Living/Healthy Retirement

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Healthy Living/Healthy Retirement for Medicare-eligible retirees

We are planning to offer a similar coaching program to our Medicare-eligible retirees beginning early in 2008. The program will be completely voluntary and will also offer an incentive of up to \$100 in value.

We are truly excited about the impact Healthy Living/Healthy Retirement will have on both the health of our retirees and our health care fund. Employer-based health plans are adopting this type of approach throughout the country. Experts and the various work groups that formed the Health Care Preservation Plan have encouraged prevention as a key strategy to reduce future costs while improving retiree health. Please watch future issue of *Ohio PERS NEWS* for more information on the implementation of this new program.

GOOD NEWS FOR NON-SMOKERS

It's a fact: Tobacco users have higher health care costs than non-users. A Center for Disease Control study estimated this amount was \$1850 per year. At the same time, we understand how difficult it can be to change habits. For example, many smokers genuinely want to quit, but because nicotine is highly addictive, they will likely make several attempts before breaking the habit.

While OPERS has supported several smoking-cessation programs, including the Ohio Tobacco Quit Line partnership, OPERS intends to reward non-Medicare eligible retirees who do not use tobacco products with a financial incentive. This will not be implemented until 2009 to provide ample time for current smokers/tobacco users to take advantage of the smoking cessation programs offered through Healthy Living/Health Retirement and the Ohio Quit Line.

OPERS takes steps to better manage open enrollment call volume

If you called us with a question during the health care open enrollment period last fall, you undoubtedly experienced a longer wait time than is normal for our member services center. We answered a record number of calls during open enrollment. The week after packets were mailed, we experienced our highest call volume on record with over 23,000 calls answered. This is an increase of 91 percent over the full week prior to the mailing. Not only was there a record number of calls, but each call was of a longer duration than normal. This combination caused callers to hold longer than usual to speak with a member services representative.

We anticipated an influx of calls due to the new health care plan options and prepared our staff accordingly. Despite our preparation, we were still overwhelmed by the number of calls. We apologize for any inconvenience and would like to assure you that we are taking steps to better manage our call volume during open enrollment this fall.

We understand that some of the health plan options are complex and we are here to help you make the best decisions for yourself and your family members. However, there are steps you can take to help us manage call volume and reduce wait time as well. When contemplating your open enrollment options, please keep in mind the following:

- If you do not wish to make any changes to your coverage, you do not need to contact us. Unless we receive notification from you, we will automatically carry your 2007 coverage options over into 2008.
- Listen carefully to the message that plays when your call is initially answered. We use this greeting to answer many common questions.
- Read your open enrollment materials carefully. The answers to most questions can be found within your personal open enrollment statement or the open enrollment guide.

Legislative update

OPERS opposes legislation in its current form that calls for divestiture of investments in Iran

Chris DeRose, OPERS executive director, recently testified before the House Financial Institutions, Real Estate and Securities committee to provide our views on House Bill 151 as introduced. HB 151 seeks to mandate the Ohio retirement systems to divest from foreign corporations doing business in Iran. To “divest” is to sell all holdings and discontinue any investment of funds in those corporations.

OPERS opposes HB 151 as introduced. However, we are in discussions with the sponsors of the bill, the Chair of the House Financial Institutions, Real Estate and Securities committee and other committee members on potential changes to the bill. We are hopeful

that we can come to an agreement that meets their intent to influence the leaders of Iran and our requirement to be good stewards (fiduciaries) of the pension and health care benefits of our members. As fiduciaries, we are legally bound by both state and federal law to act in the best interests of the members of our system.

Our concerns about the bill as introduced fall into three areas. First, the purpose of a pension system is not to influence foreign policy. We are deeply concerned about the issue of terrorism in our world. However, we think that the federal government best handles matters of foreign policy. OPERS is in compliance with the requirements set forth in federal law on this issue.

Second, while no one at OPERS questions that the bill is well

intentioned, we are concerned that an unintended consequence of the bill would be to mandate us to make investment decisions that may not be in the exclusive best interest of our members.

Finally, the costs of divestiture to your retirement system will be significant – both the cost to sell the stocks and the future investment return lost for the investments we can no longer purchase.

Hearings on HB 151 have already begun in the General Assembly. We are following this legislation very closely. We will keep you informed of the progress of House Bill 151 in future issues of *Ohio PERS NEWS*. Updates will be provided on the OPERS Web site as well.

FOR YOUR BENEFIT: *Making changes to your tax withholding*

For various reasons, you may find you need to make changes to your federal and/or state income tax withholding amounts. Following are instructions for making a tax withholding change and a couple other things you ought to know when considering a change.

- Complete a Withholding Certificate for Pension and Annuity Payments (IRS Form W-4P) for federal income tax and Recipient’s Withholding Certificate for Ohio Personal Income Tax (IT-4P) for Ohio state income tax. Both forms are available on the “Retiree Forms and Publications” page of our Web site, www.opers.org. You also can request the forms by calling our Member Services Center at 1-800-222-7377. Return completed forms to the OPERS office at 277 East Town Street, Columbus, OH 43215.
- You may change your withholding by submitting another form in the future.

- If there is no W-4P on file at OPERS, your federal withholding status is determined as a married individual claiming three dependents. We are no longer able to withhold a flat amount.
- Retirement credits, which may be available for reducing state income tax liability, should be taken into account when determining monthly state income tax withholding. Please contact the Ohio Department of Taxation (1-800-282-1780) or your own financial or tax advisor to determine if this applies to your situation.
- You are encouraged to contact a financial advisor or tax professional when making decisions about your withholding amounts. Although our member services staff can run an estimated federal tax calculation for you, they are not able to offer advice about withholding amounts.

2007 calendar of educational seminars

Please call 1-800-222-7377 to register for any seminar.

RETIREE SEMINAR – This four-hour seminar, designed exclusively for OPERS retirees, focuses on reviewing your OPERS pension and health care coverage and preserving your wealth. Topics range from taxation of your pension benefits and re-employment to health care coverage, financial/estate planning and Social Security.

There is no cost to attend this seminar and you may bring a guest. Just be sure to register your guest's name when you enroll yourself. To register for any of the dates listed below, please call us at 1-800-222-7377.

2007 RETIREE SEMINARS

Cincinnati (East) August 8	Columbus (OPERS) June 6 October 24 December 12	Lima September 19
Cincinnati (North) June 20 October 17	Cuyahoga Falls November 14	Mansfield October 24
Columbus (East) August 15	Dayton August 22	Perrysburg June 13 August 2
	Eastlake June 27	Portsmouth September 27

REMOTE COUNSELING SESSIONS – If you live outside the Columbus area and wish to discuss your retirement with a benefits counselor, you can schedule a remote counseling session. Counseling sessions are also available by phone. Call 1-800-222-7377 to make an appointment.

2007 REMOTE COUNSELING SESSIONS

Chillicothe December 10 - 14	New Philadelphia September 24 - 28	Wickliffe July 23 - 27
Cincinnati (East) June 25 - 29 November 26 - 30	Elyria/Lorain August 6 - 10	Wooster July 9 - 13
Cuyahoga Falls October 1 - 5	Perrysburg June 4 - 8 October 22 - 26	Youngstown September 10 - 14
Dayton (North) August 20 - 24	Strongsville June 11 - 15 November 5 - 9	

HEALTH CARE SEMINARS – Each session starts at 10 a.m. and lasts two hours. Space is limited. Please call 1-800-222-7377 to make your reservation.

2007 HEALTH CARE SEMINARS

Athens June 11	Cincinnati East August 20 December 10	Dayton October 29
Board man November 5	Columbus OPERS July 16 September 17	Perrysburg October 15

Ohio PERS retirement board

The 11-member Ohio PERS Board of Trustees is responsible for the administration and management of Ohio PERS. Seven of the 11 members are elected by the groups that they represent (i.e., college and university non-teaching employees, state, county, municipal, miscellaneous employees, and retired members); the Director of the Department of Administrative Services for the state of Ohio is a statutory member, and three members are investment experts appointed by the Governor, the Treasurer of State, and jointly by the Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives and the President of the Ohio Senate.

Elected Board Members

Ronald C. Alexander
State Employees

Sharon M. Downs
Retired members

John W. Maurer
Retired members

Kimberly Russell
State College and
University Employees

Cynthia Sledz
Vice Chair
Miscellaneous
Employees

Ken Thomas
Chair
Municipal Employees

Helen Youngblood
County Employees

Statutory Board Member

Hugh Quill
Director, Department
of Administrative
Services

Appointed Board Members

Robert C. Smith
Investment Expert
Governor Appointee

Warren W. Tyler
Investment Expert
Treasurer of State
Appointee

James R. Tilling
Investment Expert
General Assembly
Appointee

Chris DeRose
Executive Director



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Ohio PERS

NEWS

YOUR BENEFIT CONNECTION

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Retiree satisfaction study results

Survey shows a continued high level of satisfaction with OPERS services

The results of the 2007 *Retiree Satisfaction Study* were recently finalized. Early this year, we conducted telephone interviews with 400 retirees to assess their overall experience with OPERS and their satisfaction in specific areas including benefits administration, our member services center, retiree communications and our Web site.

Overall, OPERS retirees continue to maintain a high level of satisfaction with the service they are receiving. This is consistent with results from past years. Overall satisfaction with OPERS is rated at 92 percent “very

satisfied.” This is a slight decrease from 93 percent in 2006, although satisfaction in each specific area increased or remained consistent with 2006 results.

Retirees are contacting our member services center as frequently as they did in 2006, with recent retirees having significantly more contact. The majority of the calls were for information on insurance, benefits, and paperwork. As in past years, overall satisfaction with OPERS is being driven by retirees’ contact with member services.

Overall the majority of retirees are satisfied with the communications they receive from OPERS. The 90 percent satisfaction rating for 2007 is consistent with 92 percent in 2006. Significantly more recent retirees have access to the Internet, but OPERS Web site traffic remains unchanged since 2006. Those who do use the Web site say they are satisfied with all aspects of the site, especially the ability to access personal information.