



WEEK IN ACTION!

Weekly News From Your Union ~ July 23 – July 27, 2017

Your union's weekly newsletter, *Week In Action*, is emailed every Friday afternoon. *Week In Action* is the best way to stay up to date with weekly VSEA news!

➤ Subscribe to *Week In Action* Online: www.vsea.org/wia

TNT: Temps Not Temporary. VSEA Awaits VLRB Ruling

On June 30, VSEA sent a formal "request for reconsideration of the [Department of Human Resources] Commissioner's authorization to employ persons as temporary employees" to the the Vermont Labor Relations Board for a ruling. The request was prompted by a VSEA public records request earlier this year that found many agencies and departments are requesting "waivers" to avoid the mandated 1280-hour cap on temps hours, but not due to "emergency" situations (as required by statute) but rather, as VSEA contests in its request, to "fill government functions that were ongoing on continuing."

[Read VSEA's Formal Request](#)

VSEA is asking for the Commissioner to reconsider her approval of the waivers granted in these cases, and recognize that the incumbent employees are classified employees entitled to all applicable rights and benefits, including retirement and health care benefits and the rights and benefits set forth in the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

We'll keep you posted! In the meantime, VSEA is asking all classified state employees to be aware of the number of temporary employees working in your shop and talk with your elected VSEA state and worksite leaders about what you observe so they can share the numbers with headquarters. Thanks in advance.

2016 Temporary Employee Requests By Department or Agency

The following numbers were determined from documents furnished to VSEA as part of a recent public records request concerning temporary workers:

Department for Children & Families/Economic Services – 30

Agency of Transportation – 23

Department of Health – 21

Agency of Natural Resources – 15

Military Department – 12

Department of Aging & Independent Living – 11

Department of Public Safety – 11

Agency of Education – 10

Agency of Agriculture – 6

Department of Vermont Health Access – 6
Public Services Department – 4
Tax Department – 4
Treasurers Office – 4
Department of Information and Innovation – 4
Department of Motor Vehicles – 3
Vets’ Home – 3
Attorney General’s Office – 2
Buildings and General Services – 2
Department of Human Resources – 2
Department of Mental Health – 2
Libraries – 2
Department of Financial Regulation – 2
Agency of Human Services – 1
Human Services Board – 1
E911 – 1
Agency of Commerce – 1
Department of Corrections – 1
Human Rights Commission – 1
Department of Liquor Control – 1
Agency of the Administration – 1
Secretary of State’s Office –1

VSEA All-Member Appreciation Day Event Is Tomorrow At Lake Elmore!

The weather for tomorrow looks good, and VSEA’s Membership Recruitment Committee is inviting VSEA members from across the state to attend a special “All-Member Appreciation Day” event the Committee is hosting tomorrow at Elmore State Park off Route 12 in Elmore.

VSEA will fire up the barbeque at noon, and members are welcome to spend the day enjoying the lake, hiking trails or any of the park’s other outdoor activities.

An added bonus is that many of the Elmore State Park employees are VSEA members!

Note: WIA was fortunate enough to be able to attend the Lamoille Valley’s Chapter Annual Meeting at Lake Elmore in 2016, and the setting is gorgeous and there are a lot of activities for people of all ages. Nice place to spend a day.

Central Vermont Parking Lot Decision Makes News

As reported recently in *WIA*, the State’s decision to abruptly cancel its lease of the popular Carr Parking Lot in downtown Montpelier is causing many state employees to now have to find alternate free parking or pay a \$60 monthly fee to park in the Carr Lot.

Here are this week’s new stories about the State’s parking lot decision:

VSEA did meet this week with State officials to begin discussing ways to address the Carr Lot issue, and hopefully there will be news soon about any final decisions made to address the issue. VSEA's Facebook page and *WIA* will let readers know.

This Just In! BGS Commissioner Chris Cole is sending the following memo to state employees in central Vermont today:

To All Capital Complex State Employees:

There has been concern expressed by some State employees that there isn't sufficient parking spaces in the Capital Complex to meet everyone's needs. We have been conducting parking availability surveys every day, AM and PM, for the past week and there hasn't been a day when all parking spots were utilized. The day with the most spaces available in the AM was July 21st with 93 spaces available. The day with the least spaces available was today with 18 spaces available. The parking lot with generally the most spaces available is the Hopkins lot just off Baldwin Street next to the Pink Lady. I have attached a map of the parking lots in the Capital Complex with the Hopkins lot highlighted. In addition to the Hopkins lot, there are often spots behind 144 State Street that are available for State employee use. I believe we should have sufficient parking through the month of August and we will assess Capital Complex parking needs in September when most employees are back from their summer vacations. We will have a contingency plan in place that we can execute should we need additional parking. I terminated the Carr lot lease early in an effort to save taxpayer funds, especially during the summer months when parking pressure is lighter. Thanks for your understanding and if you have specific problems finding a spot, please contact my office and we will assist you.

Chittenden Chapter Meeting Is August 3!

The VSEA Chittenden Chapter is holding its next meeting on Thursday, August 3, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Division of Fire Safety Office, located at 380 Hurricane Lane in Williston. Food and beverages being provided!

Rutland Chapter Annual Meeting Is August 10!

The VSEA Chittenden Chapter is holding its Annual Meeting on Thursday, August 10, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Rutland Country Club, located at 275 Grove Street in Rutland. Food and beverages being provided!

Please RSVP in advance—or direct any questions or comments—to VSEA Rutland Chapter President Matt Jakubowski via email at firebeevt@yahoo.com.

Franklin / Grand Isle Chapter Annual Meeting Is August 11!

The VSEA Franklin / Grand Isle Chapter is holding its Annual Meeting on Friday, August 11, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at St. Albans Bay in St. Albans. Food and beverages being provided!

Please RSVP in advance—or direct any questions or comments—to VSEA Franklin / Grand Isle Chapter President Michael Gordon via email at michael.gordon@vermont.gov.

Retirees' Chapter Annual Meeting Is August 11!

The VSEA Retired Members' Chapter is holding its Annual Meeting on Friday, August 11, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Canadian Club, located at 414 East Montpelier Road in Barre. Meeting registration officially begins at 9:30 a.m., and each retiree's reservation includes lunch!

The Retirees' Chapter recently mailed all Chapter members an Annual Meeting registration packet and form. If you don't recall receiving the packet, please contact Retirees' Chapter President Bob Hooper by email at hooper9999@gmail.com.

Chapter's Elect Officers!

At VSEA Chapter Annual Meeting occurring across the state right now, Chapter's are electing the men and women who step up to volunteer their time and energy to help ensure the voices of state employees in every region of Vermont are being heard in Montpelier. They are also responsible for scheduling and hosting each Chapter's meetings, where members come together locally to talk about the issues important to state employees in the Chapter's domain.

Here are the results of three recent Chapter elections:

Barre Chapter

President – Sue Lafleche
Vice President – Cheryl Reed
Treasurer – Joyce White
Clerk – Sue Viens

Central Vermont Chapter

President – Cassandra Edson
Vice President – Dawn Carrillo
Treasurer – Erica Mongeon
Clerk – Vacant

Newport / Island Pond Chapter

President – Joe Silvestri
Vice President – Bob Arkley
Treasurer – Jon Bruce
Clerk – Karen Marchant

VSEA congratulates all the winners and thanks you for your service to your union.

Lamoille Valley Chapter Conducting Annual "School Supply Challenge"

Two years ago, VSEA's Lamoille Valley Chapter launched a successful effort to get Chapter members to donate school supplies to help children in need. This year, the Chapter is hoping to build on the success of the first two year's events.

The Chapter is distributing collection boxes to Lamoille worksites, and the goal is to collect as many items as possible by **Friday, August 4**. All supplies collected will be given to children currently in the custody of DCF Morrisville Family Services.

All types of supplies are needed, including: backpacks, lunch boxes, pencil cases, pencils, crayons, colored pencils, notebooks, folders, rulers, scissors and markers, to name a few.

Questions? Please contact VSEA at vsea@vsea.org.

VSEA Saying Goodbye To Union Representative Dave Van Deusen, While Welcoming Back VSEA's Past Organizing Director Vinnie O'Connor To Replace Him

VSEA is sad to be saying goodbye to Union Representative Dave Van Deusen, whose last day with the union will be August 7, after which he will begin work supporting 40 collective bargaining agreements across New England in his new position with AFSCME Council 93. In his five years with VSEA, Dave left his mark, effectively working with the union's AOT Unit to empower its members and build the Unit's strength, while also doing the same for members belonging to VSEA's Housing and Defender General Units.

"I greatly value my five years at VSEA," Van Deusen wrote in his resignation letter to VSEA. In addition to recruiting new stewards and establishing contacts at some 90 worksites in his jurisdiction, Van Deusen says he "takes pride in knowing that, in a small way, he took part in VSEA's 'Fight Back' campaign and in two full rounds of bargaining victories."

As Van Deusen departs, VSEA is welcoming back past VSEA Organizing Director Vinnie O'Connor as his replacement. O'Connor, who says he's pleased to be returning, brings a wealth of labor relations, contract enforcement and bargaining experience to the position.

VSEA thanks Dave for his service and welcomes back Vinnie. O'Connor will rejoin the VSEA team on August 21.

Time To Register For VSEA' 73rd Annual Meeting!

VSEA is holding its all-members-invited Annual Meeting on Saturday, September 9, at the Stoweflake Resort in Stowe, Vt. This year's meeting, your union's 73rd, is an important one, as it's being held just after a new round of bargaining is scheduled to start with the State and in advance of October's expected federal budget cuts, which could adversely impact many public services. Members attending Annual Meeting will also be the first to hear the results of the officer elections that VSEA will be conducting in the coming weeks.

Reminder postcards about Annual Meeting are being mailed soon to all members. **All those who want to attend must register and reserve a room(s) by Tuesday, August 8.**

Friday night, September 8, there is a dinner banquet followed by an ADULTS ONLY dance - **"Flashback to the 50's & 60's"**. Members are urged to come dressed in their best 50's or 60's attire and dance to the music of DJ, Allen Brown. Allen is a former VSEA member and AOT Employee. Prizes will be awarded for the best 50's and 60's costume. Have your picture taken in the photo booth by Emile.

[VSEA members can register online today here.](#)

Discounted 2017 Great Escape / Splashwater Kingdom Day Tickets Now Available Exclusively At VSEA HQ!

"Two parks of fun for the price of one!"
Lake George, New York

Park Open Now!

Discount Great Escape / Splashwater Kingdom tickets are now available for purchase and pick up at VSEA headquarters—and there is no service charge attached. **VSEA is not offering the online ticket purchase option this year**, but HQ will mail your tickets to you in advance, but if you choose the mailing option, please ensure you reserve far enough in advance to receive your tickets.

2017 Regular Day Tickets = \$36 each (40% savings!)

To reserve and pickup your tickets, contact VSEA Administrative Assistant Sue Devoid by email (sdevoid@vsea.org) or by phone (802-223-5247).

Submit Your 2017 VSEA Annual Meeting Award Nominations Online Today!

It's time again to submit your nominations for a 2017 VSEA Outstanding Performance Award in the following categories:

- 1) VSEA Chapter of the Year;
- 2) VSEA Steward of the Year;
- 3) The Mazza Award — For Outstanding Service to VSEA;
- 4) The Macaig Award — For Outstanding Public Service; and
- 5) The Linda Coan Memorial Award — Outstanding VSEA Staff Member

Submit your nominations online at VSEA.org. **The deadline to submit nominations is Tuesday, August 8, by close of business.**

"VSEA's Special Events Committee is urging members to give some thought to each of these awards and if you know of a deserving state employee—or a deserving Chapter—then please don't hesitate to send your nomination(s) to us," says VSEA Special Events Committee Chair Ken Bortell.

Winners will be announced at VSEA's Annual Meeting banquet on September 9 in Stowe.

Agenda Released For August 18 VSEA "Steward Summit." Register Today!

In an effort to better educate frontline worksite Stewards about their role in VSEA, as well as provide them with enhancements to their existing skill set, VSEA's Field Department is hosting a series of "Steward Summits" across Vermont this year.

VSEA Stewards are learning the latest developments relating to contract enforcement and receiving an overview of the budget, safety and health and other challenges that lie ahead for state employees. Stewards attending are being asked to immediately help out by taking some of what they learn back to the worksite to educate their colleagues.

Three, six-hour trainings remain, and every current VSEA Steward is required to attend one session.

Here is the agenda released for the August 18 summit in Waterbury at the Best Western Hotel:

8:30 a.m. – Registration & Breakfast

9:00 a.m. – Welcome & Introductions

9:30 a.m. to Noon – Grievances (Learning the Basics) or Safety & Health

1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. – Role of Steward in an Investigation or Organizing (Member Recruitment)

2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. – Bullying in the Workplace

Future Steward Summits (all 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) are scheduled for:

October 20 – Hotel Coolidge, 39 South Main St., White River Junction

November 3 – Holiday Inn, 476 Holiday Drive, Rutland

[Visit VSEA.org](http://VSEA.org) To Register For Steward Summit

Recertification Votes Scheduled For Iowa Public Employees. Unions Challenging

[Iowa Public Radio reports on July 27](#) that election dates have been set for September and October for thousands of Iowa public employees to vote to either "recertify their unions or disband their bargaining units."

Iowa lawmakers passed the ill-advised legislation that created the voting requirement that critics say will make it harder for public-sector unions to represent their members. The new law mandates a recertification vote every time there is a contract set to expire.

"There's some organizing that's going to have to go on for my clients and labor unions to go out and reach those people to see if they want to vote in the affirmative to retain the bargaining representative," Attorney Jay Smith tells IPR.

The state's largest public sector and teachers' union are in court challenging the new law's constitutionality.

Roughly, 3,300 Iowa state employees will vote in the fall elections, unless the courts first rule them unconstitutional.

Note: The Iowa scenario is similar to one that could be created nationally next spring, depending on how the U.S. Supreme Court rules on a case it will hear this fall, titled Janus vs. Illinois.

If Searching For Child Care, Don't Forget This Important Resource For State Employees

Longtime VSEA member, now retiree, Dave Clark has served on VSEA's Child and Elder Care Committee for many years, and he recently asked *WIA* to remind state employees about an important child-care resource that is currently available to them.

"The Committee has noticed a recent decline in employees' usage of the valuable child-care resources available to them, so we asked *WIA* to help us remind VSEA members about what is available," explains Clark.

VSEA members can click [here](#) to learn more about the Committee's "Child-Care Referral Service" and other child-care resources for state employees, including possible child-care reimbursement to qualifying employees.

Reminder: VSEA Membership Recruitment Committee Sponsoring 2017 Recruitment Drive. Prizes Being Awarded!

Last fall, VSEA's Membership Recruitment Committee launched a "Membership Engagement and Recruitment Initiative" to grow the union's ranks. The Committee asked members to talk with current agency-fee payers about the benefits of full-fledged membership and why the member should make the switch. If the member decides to upgrade their membership, the recruiting member will have the satisfaction of knowing they helped their union become stronger, but, in addition, the Membership Recruitment Committee will be awarding different levels of prizes to members, based on the number of new VSEA members recruited.

Here are the guidelines to participate and be eligible for a prize:

- Whether submitting your recruited member(s) name(s) on a physical recruitment card or online, **you must include your name as the recruiter;**
- Every member who recruits a new member will have his or her name entered into a drawing for the Grand Prize. The winner's name will be drawn at VSEA's Annual Meeting in September 2017, and the winner must be present to claim the prize;
- Team entries are being accepted. Please register with Membership Recruitment Committee Chair Katelyn Chase by emailing her at kchase@vsea.org.
- Members who recruit a new member, who then agrees to join your union's political awareness committee (VTPAC) will receive an additional chance to win the Grand Prize, and
- The cut-off date for this competition is **August 30, 2017.**

Here are the different prize levels:

75 prizes awarded - \$10 gift card and a VSEA water bottle
40 prizes awarded - \$25 gift card and a VSEA hat
15 prizes awarded - \$50 gift card and a VSEA tote bag
8 prizes awarded - \$100 and a VSEA vest
1 Grand Prize - \$1200

Note: WIA is periodically reminding members about this effort until its culmination in August 2017.

Subscribe To VSEA Today!

VSEA's Communications Department is happy to disseminate any and all communications the leadership, Chapters, Units, and others request, however, the lists the Department currently pull from are provided to the union by the State of Vermont. VSEA's Communications Department has found the lists to be dated, incomplete and sometimes lacking key information that was entered by a VSEA staff person but later overwritten or deleted during a State data dump.

To help VSEA more effectively reach active members—and really all those members who want to know what's going on in their union—VSEA will be working hard in the coming months to collect members' emails on its own and begin to build contact lists that cannot be altered by a State download.

You can help us get started by visiting, VSEA.org/subscribe and signing up for the VSEA communications you are interested in receiving.

Thank you in advance for subscribing. Please urge your colleagues to do the same.

Quote Of The Week!

"By misclassifying these positions as temporary, the requesters are seeking to circumvent the position count authorized by the Legislature, and to thereby misrepresent to the voters the actual position count required in order to maintain state services."

Sentence from [VSEA's recent request to the VLRB](#), seeking a ruling to stop the State from permitting agencies and departments to use "waivers" to avoid the statute that governs temporary workers' hours.

Are Required Emergency Drills Happening Where You Work?

With the recent bomb threat at the State Office Building in St. Albans, VSEA wants to find out if the State of Vermont is following BGS emergency-situation protocol where you work.

The protocol on BGS' website reads:

"All owned and leased State Office Buildings occupied by State employees will practice a minimum of (1) evacuation fire drill every year and (1) Active Shooter and hostile intruder drill at least every two years. A record of these emergency drills should be recorded in the EML by the designated ECM on the day of the drill.

The Safety Committees will coordinate drills with their respective sites. The Safety Committees shall meet within (14) days after the drills to discuss, critique, and analyze the drill."

VSEA wants to know if the proper training is occurring at your workplace and when it occurred last. Also, if you are unaware of this protocol, that's not good and VSEA wants to know this as well and also where you work.

Please send an email with your input to VSEA at vsea@vsea.org. Write " Protocol Status" in the subject line.

Threatened While On The Job? VSEA Wants To Know.

VSEA President Dave Bellini is asking all state employees who are threatened while performing your job duties to provide an account of the threat not only to your supervisor or the State, but also to VSEA.

"VSEA wants to begin to compile its own record of threats against frontline state employees, no matter your occupation," explains Bellini. "I'm asking all employees who are threatened, especially those working in AHS, to take a few minutes to fill out an online form VSEA made to collect your report. The information will help us provide a firsthand account of the number of threats being made and where they are being made, in addition to some other things."

If you are a state employee who is threatened on the job, please click [here](#) to find the online report form, **which will remain confidential**, unless otherwise approved by you.

Upcoming Meetings/Events/Holidays:

August 3

Chittenden Chapter Annual Meeting
Division Of Fire Safety
380 Hurricane Lane |
Williston
5:30 p.m.

August 3

Corrections Unit Bargaining Team Meeting
VSEA HQ
Montpelier
9:00 a.m.

August 4

Steward Training: Grievance Committee
VSEA HQ
Montpelier
9:00 a.m.

August 4

Judiciary Unit Executive Committee Meeting
Rutland Court House
Merchant Row
Rutland
9:00 a.m.

August 4

Judiciary Unit Member Meeting
Rutland Court House
Merchant Row
Rutland
12:00 p.m.