

PO Box 932  
Grand Island, NE 68802

January / February 2008

President

Regina Rathman

President Elect

Scott Jensen

Immediate Past President

Mike Henke

Secretary

Beth Schuler

Treasurer

vacant

Membership Chair

Tina Feek

Marketing/Public Relations

Leslie Smith

Professional Development

Terri Hongsermeier

Diversity Chair

Joyce Carroll

SHRM Foundation Chair

Jill Smith

Legislative Chair

Melissa Karloff

Certification Chair

Pennie Morgan

Workforce Readiness Chair

Deb Hamling

**In this issue...**

Welcome Letter.....	1
HR Games.....	2
Meeting Schedule.....	3
Membership Update.....	3
2008 State Leadership Conf.....	3
Legal Updates.....	4
FMLA Update.....	5 & 6
Membership Application.....	7

## Welcome Letter from the President

Welcome! We're so glad you chose to renew your membership for 2008. We are very excited about the upcoming year and all the activities we will be offering. We are delighted to bring to you again our Annual HR Conference on Thursday, April 24 to be held in Grand Island. Be sure to mark your calendar to attend. We are also excited to be a part of hosting the North Central Regional HR Games. This once in a lifetime event will be held at the University of Nebraska at Omaha April 11-12. We do hope you will plan to volunteer for this exciting adventure.

Our chapter's membership is 106 members strong. 62 of our members are also members of SHRM. We have 12 PHR members and 3 SPHR members. Pretty impressive group!

If you have any suggestions on how to enhance our chapter, please don't hesitate to come forward with your ideas! We'd love to hear them.

Till next time!

Regina Rathman, PHR

Employment Coordinator – Saint Francis Medical Center

President CNHRMA

# 2008 North Central Regional Student Conference

## HR Games April 11 – 12, 2008 University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, NE

Volunteers are still needed for this event. The HR Games will take place at the University of Nebraska in Omaha.  
The following is a tentative schedule:

### Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup> –

2:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.: Registration  
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.: HR Games Training  
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.: Dinner  
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.: Welcome and Keynote  
7:00 p.m.: HR Games (Round #1)  
7:30 p.m.: HR Games (Round #2)  
8:00 p.m.: HR Games (Round #3)  
8:30 p.m.: HR Games (Round #4)  
9:00 p.m.: Student Networking Event

### Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> –

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.: Breakfast  
7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.: HR Games Volunteer Training  
8:30 a.m.: HR Games (Round #5)  
9:00 a.m.: HR Games (Round #6)  
9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.: Employer Exhibition and Coffee Break  
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.: Concurrent Sessions  
11:00 a.m.: HR Games (Round #7)  
11:30 a.m.: HR Games (Round #8)  
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Employer Exhibition and Lunch  
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.: Concurrent Sessions  
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.: HR Games – Semi-final  
3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.: Employer Exhibition and Coffee Break  
3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.: HR Games – Final  
5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.: Dinner and Awards  
7:00 p.m.: Student Networking (Optional)

**Please note: The session times, etc. can change as the agenda becomes finalized.  
Stay tuned for additional information.**

*HRGames* is an academic competition for SHRM student chapters. It provides positive and exciting way to prepare students for the human resource profession and the Professional in Human Resources (PHR) certification exam conducted by the Human Resource Certification Institute (HRCI). Since the *HRGames* competition is open to undergraduate student chapter members only, the addition of educational content provides an opportunity for graduate students, student members not competing in the games, and student members-at-large to benefit from attending a regional event. We believe this will open the door to more students and more participation at the regional level – as well as greater learning and networking.

We are currently in the planning phase for this event, please mark your calendar for April 11-12, 2008 and continue to watch for additional information. Again, your chapter does not need to participate in the *HRGames* competition to attend this regional student conference. We have a whole schedule of non-*HRGames* activities planned.

Furthermore, there is **no fee to register** for this event. Register now! Each student, chapter advisor, and HRGames team who will be participating in this event is asked to complete the conference registration form online at <http://sapphire.shrm.org/studentvolunteerconf/default.aspx?ConfID=0>

**Registration will be open until Monday, April 7. Don't delay, register today!**

## 2008 Meeting / Events Schedule

Date	Topic	Location
January 24	Wage and Benefit Survey Results	Grand Island - Platte Valley State Bank
February 28	Top 10 Cases of 2007	Kearney - UNK Oak Room
March 27	FMLA	Hastings - Head Start - 123 N. Marian Rd
April 24	All-Day Seminar	Grand Island – Home Federal (Stolley Park)
May 22	Workforce Readiness	Kearney – UNK Sand Hills Room
June 26	Wellness	Hastings - Head Start - 123 N. Marian Rd
July 24	Executive Committee Meeting	Grand Island
August 28	Etiquette	Kearney – UNK Sand Hills Room
September 18 <sup>th</sup> 19 <sup>th</sup>	State Conference “Heart of HR”	Qwest Center, Omaha
October 23	CEO Forum	Grand Island – Platte Valley State Bank
November 13	Work Place Violence	Grand Island location TBA

**All meetings are at 4pm unless otherwise noted**

## Membership Update

Hello Everyone!

Let me just start by saying, 2007 was an AWESOME year for CNHRMA’s membership and I have a strong feeling that 2008 will be even better! As you can see from Regina’s notes, our membership has grown! Out of the entire state of Nebraska, CNHRMA’s membership has increased far more than any of the other chapters by 23%! Now, that is something to be proud of!! We ended 2007 with 128 members. Therefore, I think we are off to a **great** start for 2008! By the way, keep the questions and answers coming, what a wonderful tool to expand your knowledge and help someone else out in return!



## 2008 State Leadership Conference

Our annual Leadership Conference was held on January 18<sup>th</sup> in Columbus. Regina Rathman, Scott Jensen, Tina Feek, Leslie Smith, Beth Schuler, Deb Hamling, Joyce Carroll and Pennie Morgan attended the All Day Conference. The conference this year was called “Model the Way – Inspire Others to Lead”, which entailed learning how to communicate and network, and how to lead others. Our speaker was Andrea Fredrickson from the American Institute of Management. We heard SHRM updates from our North Central Regional Director, Pam Green. The 2008 Leaders for each chapter were announced as well. There were also opportunities to network with other board members from across the state.



## Legal Updates

Be sure to keep up to date with the latest issues regarding LB 175, LB 450, LB 495, and LB 500. You can access this information at [www.nebraskalegislature.gov](http://www.nebraskalegislature.gov).

**LB 175** – Requires employers to provide employee reason for termination.

**LB 450** - Provide immunity for employer disclosure of certain employee information.

**LB 495** - Prohibit employers from requiring use of compensated leave as prescribed.

**LB 500** - Change Employment Security Law provisions governing the experience account of employers.

## Nebraska: State Restricts Employer Use of Social Security Numbers

**By Business and Legal Reports, Inc.**

On May 24, Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman signed Legislative Bill 674, which provides that an employer may use an employee's Social Security number (SSN) only for state and federal tax purposes. The legislation specifically prohibits the use of an employee's SSN in lieu of or in addition to an employee identification number.

Employers are prohibited from doing the following under the new law:

- Posting, displaying, or otherwise making available to the public or co-workers more than the last four digits of an SSN.
- Requiring an individual to transmit more than the last four digits of his or her SSN over the Internet unless encrypted or over a secure connection.
- Requiring the use of more than the last four digits of an SSN to access an Internet site unless a password or other unique identifier is also required.
- Using more than the last four digits of an SSN as an employee number.

An employer that utilizes an employee's SSN in violation of the new law is guilty of a Class V misdemeanor and may be fined up to \$100.

## New Requirements for State Withholding

Beginning January 1, 2008, the State of Nebraska has implemented new requirements for state income tax withholdings for employers who have 25 or more employees. According to LB 223 “. . . every employer and payor employing 25 or more employees shall withhold at least 3% of the gross wages minus tax qualified deductions of each employee unless the employee provides satisfactory evidence that a lesser amount of withholding is justified in the employee's particular circumstances.” The legislation goes on to state “. . . the Tax Commissioner may impose, assess, and collect a penalty of not more than \$1,000 per violation.” For more information around this new requirement go to: [www.revenue.ne.gov/question/wh\\_new\\_quest.html](http://www.revenue.ne.gov/question/wh_new_quest.html)

## FMLA Expanded to Add Leave for the Family of Service members

After months of trying to amend the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Congress successfully inserted new FMLA language into the National Defense Authorization Act, which passed both the House and the Senate last December. In something of a surprise development, President Bush vetoed the National Defense Authorization Act on December 28, 2007, because of language unrelated to the FMLA changes. Congress removed the offending non-FMLA language and both the House and the Senate passed the revised bill last week. President Bush has now signed the National Defense Authorization Act, which effected the first major changes to the FMLA since its passage in 1993.

The new language will allow an employee to take the 12-week FMLA leave "because of a qualifying exigency" arising out of the fact that the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the employee is on active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty. The term "qualifying exigency" will be defined by the Department of Labor, which is charged with drafting regulations to implement the legislation.

Congress has also created a new 26-week leave period so that the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin may care for a service member who suffers a "serious injury or illness." The injury must be sustained while on active duty in the Armed Forces, which includes the National Guard or Reserve. While the standard FMLA eligibility requirements continue to apply, employers should note several provisions that will potentially have a major impact on their policies.

- First, the legislation is clear that the maximum combined amount of leave under the new law is 26 weeks, not 12 weeks. For example, an employee who takes 12 weeks off for the birth of a child would still be eligible for an additional 14 weeks of leave in the event their spouse, parent, son, daughter, or next of kin who is in the Armed Services sustains a serious injury or illness while on active duty. However, an eligible employee who takes off 12 weeks for the birth of a child would not be able to take an additional 12 weeks off because their spouse, parent, son, daughter, or next of kin is called to active duty.
- Second, the employee may elect or the employer may require that those seeking to take advantage the newly created 26-week leave utilize other paid leave concurrently with the leave.
- Third, and perhaps more troublesome for those who have struggled with employees who utilize intermittent leave, the legislation specifically provides that eligible employees may take the 26-week leave "intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule basis."
- Fourth, spouses who work for the same employer are limited to an aggregate of 26 weeks between the two of them, unless the leave is solely medical leave, in which case they are still limited to 12 weeks each.
- Fifth, the legislation requires that whenever the necessity for the leave is foreseeable, the employee requesting the leave must provide as much notice as is "reasonable and practicable."
- Finally, the legislation provides employers with a mechanism, subject to regulations promulgated by the Department of Labor, to require certification by the employee that the covered service member is indeed on active duty.

(Continued...)

(FMLA Continuation...)

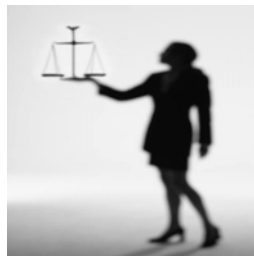
Employers should also be aware that this legislation contains no effective date, which means that it became effective upon signature by the President.

Interestingly, our preliminary review of the legislation suggests that it may contain a major flaw tied to the FMLA definition of the term "son or daughter," which is defined as "a biological, adopted or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis who is: under 18 years of age; or 18 years of age or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability." Using this statutory definition could effectively eviscerate the new leave provisions as they are applied to parents of Service members. By statute, the Armed Services require individuals to be 18 years of age (17 years of age with parental consent) to enlist. As such, only parents of 17-year-old Service members would be eligible for the 12-week leave (as it is unlikely that a Service member with a physical or mental disability would be called to duty). Moreover, as it relates to the 26-week leave for "serious injury or illness," a parent of a Service member older than 18 years of age would only be eligible to take the leave if the Service member's "serious injury or illness" rises to the level of a physical or mental disability. It is very likely that there will be many Service members who are deemed to have a "serious injury or illness," as that term is defined by the Act that does not rise to the level of a mental or physical disability. As such, the parent of the Service member would not be eligible for the 26-week leave. If this definitional flaw exists as we believe, we would certainly expect corrective legislation.

Despite this uncertainty and the lack of implementing regulations, employers who have 50 or more employees should familiarize themselves with these new provisions and begin making preparations to amend their current FMLA policies. Nebraska employers will see some similarities between the new FMLA and the Nebraska Family Military Leave Act passed last April. Nebraska employers with fewer than 50 employees will continue to be governed by the Nebraska Act. Nebraska employers with more than 50 employees should follow the provisions of the federal FMLA, which provides greater benefits than the Nebraska law.

David J. Kramer  
Scott S. Moore  
*Baird Holm*

Please be sure to visit [www.bairdholm.com](http://www.bairdholm.com) and click on the news and events link to learn more about FMLA.



**Do you know of someone in your organization that maybe interested in joining CNHRMA? Pass this newsletter on to them and ask them to fill out the membership application!!!**

7

## **CNHRMA 2008 MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

The information provided will be listed in CNHRMA's Membership Directory.

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**CERTIFICATION** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHR** \_\_\_\_\_ **SPHR** \_\_\_\_\_ **NONE** \_\_\_\_\_

**COMPANY** \_\_\_\_\_

**JOB TITLE** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**TELEPHONE** \_\_\_\_\_

**FAX** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-MAIL ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual CNHRMA Membership fee for 2008 is \$40, for non-SHRM Members.  
Annual CNHRMA fee is \$20 for SHRM Members.**

Are you a National SHRM Member? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Please indicate your SHRM membership number in the box above (if applicable)

**Please return this completed form and annual membership payment to:**

CNHRMA  
PO Box 932  
Grand Island, NE 68802-0932  
[www.cnhrma.org](http://www.cnhrma.org)

CNHRMA Executive Committee Use Only

1 Indicate dues were:  
 Paid on the following date \_\_\_\_\_ by cash or check (note check#) \_\_\_\_\_

CNHRMA Executive Committee Member Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information or inquiries about CNHRMA, please contact:  
Tina Feek • (308) 227-6400 • [tinafeek@yahoo.com](mailto:tinafeek@yahoo.com)

AFFILIATE OF

