



From the President

Beth Ludeman

Chances are, by the time you read this report, the midterm election season will be concluded. Whatever the outcome, we need to pull together and forge ahead in continuing to secure our collective future as an association. You may identify strongly with the aspect of the WA-WMEA as a professional organization, promoting professional development and issue advocacy as it relates to building better schools and serving the needs of our students. On the other hand, you may be a member who relates passionately to the characteristic of our organization as a union, securing and protecting workers' rights, salaries, and benefits.

I would ask you to consider that we cannot exist as an organization unless we stress both facets of our lives as educators. It is difficult to imagine meeting our students' needs unless our own basic needs are met first. At the same time, in order to maintain community support for our contract negotiations, it is imperative that the public see the value that we, as school employees who work toward enhancing student achievement and therefore social progress, bring to the proverbial table.

Through my discussions with many of you over the course of the last couple of years, I know these issues are important to you. I also know that because many of you have many commitments outside of your professional lives, you may not have the time to act on those concerns. That became evident in the response to the recent committee volunteer flyer (incidentally, that deadline has been extended; give Director Chris Morrissey a call or e-mail message at Wilson Elementary if you simply didn't get your response back in time).

Let's be candid. Last spring, our membership was split in terms of the leadership direction of our local. If you voted to endorse the current path, I am making a personal plea here to get active by volunteering for some type of committee involvement. The Executive Board and Building Representatives can't do it without you. Your commitment of time would be minimal, and your input is needed to develop programming that meets the needs of our members.

But to be honest, I am really urging those of you who are troubled by the current direction of the association to come forward and become active in the issues that concern you the most. There were numerous committees to choose from that span a range of issues that affect our membership. Registering a vote in local elections is a significant act, but can not be the end of activism if a change is what you'd like to see happen.

That is why I have asked the building reps to hold meetings in your buildings to discuss issues as they arise, and in particular at this time, the issue of pursuing a local president release time grant through WEAC and NEA.

Through this funding, the president would be better able to make building visits on a regular basis during the course of a school day, not just after or before the school day begins. I know it is difficult with coaching and other extracurricular activities to be able to attend meetings that are held outside of the school day; in fact, as current president, it is often impossible for me to make them, too, with all the other meetings I have on my calendar. We are currently exploring options for the local funding requirement in this undertaking; one of the reasons that there was a constitutional change made last year in the flexibility of the Executive Board configuration is so there would be **(LUDEMAN cont. p2)**

Dates to Remember

- 11/10** WEAC Standing Committees and Board of Directors Madison 7 pm (through Saturday)
- 11/13** WA-WM School Board, Ad. Bldg., 7 pm (Pershing Elementary/Oberbeck)
- 11/14** Labor Management Cooperation Committee, Ad Bldg., 4 pm
- 11/15** School Employee Flu Immunization Clinic, FLW, 3-5 pm
- 11/22** THANKSGIVING BREAK BEGINS
- 11/27** WA-WM School Board, Ad Bldg., 7 pm (Horace Mann Elementary/Lehman, Sikich)
- 12/4** West Suburban Council Exec Board, UEP Bldg., 4:15 pm
- 12/6** WA-WMEA Exec Board, That's Amore, 4:30 pm
- 12/12** Labor Management Cooperation Committee, Ad Bldg., 4 pm
- 12/13** WA-WMEA Rep. Assembly – CANCELLED
- 12/18** WA-WM School Board, Ad Bldg., 7 pm (Lincoln Elementary/Livingston)
- 12/22** WINTER BREAK BEGINS (through Tues 1/2/07)
- 1/3/07** BACK TO SCHOOL; WA-WMEA Exec Board, UEP Bldg. 4:30 pm
- 1/8** WEAC SE Caucus, UEP Bldg., 4:30 pm; WA-WM School Board, Ad Bldg., 7 pm (Central High School/Ceel)
- 1/9** Labor Management Cooperation Committee, Ad Bldg., 4 pm
- 1/10** WA-WMEA Rep Assembly, UEP Bldg., 4 pm
- 1/12** WEAC Standing Committees and Board of Directors Madison, 7 pm (through Saturday)
- 1/17** West Suburban Council Rep Assembly, UEP Bldg. 4:30 pm
- 1/19** NEA Midwest Regional Leadership Conference Chicago (through Sun)
- 1/22** WA-WM School Board, Ad Bldg., 7 pm (Mitchell Elementary/Ceel)
- 1/26** Record Keeping Day
- 1/29** Inservice Day



(LUDEMAN) more options available for the creative structuring of the positions and therefore, the budget development for the future.

The responsibilities of the president are as follows and can also be found in the Constitution and Bylaws as well as on our website:

The President of our local Association serves a one-year elected term on the WA-WMEA Executive Board. The Executive Board, or Executive Committee, is the executive authority of our Association. Executive Board meetings are held during the school year, on the first Wednesday of each month. The President appoints the chairpersons of standing committees, which include the Negotiations Chairperson, the Professional Rights and Responsibilities (PR&R) Co-Chairs, the Elections Chairperson and Parliamentarian, and any other Chairpersons as recommended by the Executive Board and Representative Assembly. Additionally, the President is required to serve as an ex officio member of all standing committees. It is also the responsibility of the President to:

- Develop the agenda and preside over meetings. This includes monthly Executive Board meetings and monthly Representative Assembly (RA) meetings, held on the second Wednesday of each month.
- Plan, with the aid of the other officers and the Executive Board, the goals, objectives, and programs of the Local Association.
- Arrange for publication and distribution of internal information concerning Association matters. This includes the Newsletter that is distributed to each of our members, and serving as a clearinghouse for NEA, WEAC, and UniServ bulletins and information.
- Exercise general supervision over the budget.
- Recruit and develop leadership among Association members and encourage local leaders to take an active role in Association policies.
- Represent the Association before the public and the press.
- Represent the WA-WMEA as a delegate to the WEAC and NEA Representative Assembly.

In fulfillment of these responsibilities, I would conservatively estimate that I currently spend approximately 7-8 hours per week during the school year – and that is outside of the contract bargaining season. On a monthly basis, I spend an average of:

- one hour preparing for the monthly Executive Board meeting
- two to three hours attending and chairing the monthly Executive Board meeting
- one hour preparing my report for The Word, our newsletter
- one hour preparing for the monthly Representative Assembly meeting
- two to three hours attending and chairing the monthly Representative Assembly meeting
- 1.5-2 hours conducting research for and attending the monthly Labor Management meeting
- 13-15 hours monthly representing WA-WMEA to the West Suburban Council and WEAC Boards of Directors*
- 5 hours of phone calling and e-mail correspondence with members and/or administrative issues
- 2-3 occasional hours monthly for PTA Council and standing committee meetings

* Though it is not a requirement of office for the president to serve in this capacity, I am convinced that this more direct link to WEAC and West Suburban Council has permitted a more streamlined approach to facilitation of communication regarding policy and issues to our local members in the age of ESEA/NCLB and PI-34, and therefore better service to our members

During the cycle of bargaining a contract, the time at the table and researching issues averages another 7-8 hours per week, conservatively. I have also not included here the president's responsibility to represent our local to the WEAC and NEA RA each year, which tacks on an additional 65-70 hours annually.

Please do not misunderstand my "laundry list" here. I am not complaining; I love the work that you have elected me to do. However, my experience has informed my vision for our future as an organization, and here's what it says: unless we can find a way to accommodate more release time for the president's position, it will be nigh onto impossible to meet the needs of our changing membership and the students we serve by visiting buildings and working with BR teams; to more profoundly affect educational issues that impact our schools in West Allis by lobbying Senate and Assembly members in Madison on an ongoing basis; or to elicit, retain, and advocate with local representatives to our school board. The work I do with the Executive Board and Rep Assembly keeps us going; having release time for our president, now and in

the future, will permit us to achieve a more commanding destiny than we can currently manage.

Just to be clear, I have no interest in being president of WA-WMEA in perpetuity. It is my hope and belief that the release time grant and its outcomes will create interest from potential leaders who now see the position as too much of a burden to personal and family obligations. We deserve the best leadership we can bring forward, not simply that of whomever may be willing to sacrifice a personal life to serve the membership.

As I alluded to previously, I will be working with the Executive Board to determine where we can cut costs and change procedures in an attempt to partially fund this opportunity. The only way we can realize the difference a move like this will make is by trying it on for size; in fact, that is the very purpose for the grant. Please let your BRs know whether you endorse the concept or not; and if you do, what you might be willing to support in the way of a dues increase in the future. Last year when an increase was researched and approved, our treasurer, Greg Wall, indicated that that increase put us in the middle in terms of other comparable local dues. I think that we are "advanced proficient" when it comes to our commitment and talents as educators; let's not be dissuaded from achieving greater goals and accomplishments over, as one BR was heard to remark in our discussion last month, "the price of a cup of coffee a week".



Great Schools Conduit: Painless Contributions to the Candidates of Your Choice

Did you know there is a program that lets you save for political contributions for candidates of your choice? In the **Great Schools Conduit**, you contribute \$20 a month to a savings account, which is separate from all other WEAC accounts, including the WEAC-PAC account. Your money is kept under your own name and you have your own identification number for the account. The Great Schools Conduit acts like a bank, with disbursements permitted only with the explicit authorization of you, the contributor. The Great Schools Conduit is great because: **(CONDUIT cont. p3)**

(CONDUIT)

- You control your conduit funds and you may remove them at any time.
- You decide who will receive your donations.
- From time to time, you will be asked for a contribution to a race in which a pro-public education candidate has a good chance of winning and turning the tide in our state.
- You are under no obligation to make the requested contribution.
- If you decide to make a contribution, it can be in any amount up to your current total balance in the conduit.
- To sign up for the Great Schools Conduit, please contact Anita Wobst at 262-789-6000.

The Great Schools Conduit is a painless way to make contributions to those candidates who have so much influence over your profession, your salary, your benefits, and your working conditions. **Help protect your profession.** Many members are solicited for political donations, and they like the Great Schools Conduit because they can truthfully say "I gave at the office!"



Public Relations Report

Lynn Herbst, PR Director

As the Thanksgiving holiday draws near, I am reminded that there are many reasons to be thankful. I am inspired by the many talented friends and colleagues who teach with me in the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District. I have been rewarded by my active involvement in the WA-WM Education Association because it has given me the chance to meet so many of you, and to appreciate the dedication, compassion, and care that you demonstrate toward your students. As your PR Director, I am always looking for ways to promote the many positive things that are taking place in our schools at all levels because of the hard work that you do each day. Thank you to those teachers who have already taken the time to forward items to me. I recently met with Superintendent Wachholz and Information Specialist Stu Wilke to express an interest in coordinating my PR role with the District in order to share and publicize information about upcoming events. Although they have been willing to send me a monthly school event calendar, that information tends to be pretty generic and often fails to

include the many other neat things that are going on. I am pleased to report that the District is willing to air photos of some of the activities taking place in our buildings on cable Channel 13's video bulletin board. Although top priority will be given to academic activities/lessons, some other suggested activities that might be photographed could include Thanksgiving Food Drives, Coats for Kids, Book Drives, other charitable events, community-partner events, or even upcoming parent-teacher conferences. This is a great opportunity for us to showcase the many ways that we reach and teach the students of the WA-WM community. It will also provide the Association with another way to promote any special fundraising events that we may be involved with throughout the year.

So now what? I am looking for some assistance...FROM YOU!! The great thing is that it is easy for anyone to help me out, especially since every single school has at least one digital camera on premises. All I need is for you to **email me your digital (jpeg) photos along with a description of where and when an event took place, and who is included in your photograph.** Group photos are acceptable. *If photos of individual students working with teachers are submitted, please verify that those students do not have a video or photo "opt-out" form signed by their parents on file.* Be sure to submit your photos to me on a timely basis! You may send them to me at school at herbl@wawm.k12.wi.us. You may want to involve those students who participate in your on-site video clubs by having them take some photos. I would sure like to report back that I have been deluged with photos from all of the schools in the weeks and months ahead.

American Education Week takes place November 12-18. This year's theme is "**Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility,**" which is designed to remind the public of the important role that educators fill in our communities. American Education Week spotlights all of the people who make our schools so great, including teachers, EAs, secretaries, educational support professionals, custodians, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, and the many others who provide invaluable service to our schools. Here are some ideas for you so that you can celebrate every day of the week:

- **Monday, November 13: Nationwide Kick Off Celebration.** Begin American Education Week with a high profile

event to reinforce the theme and preview the week's activities.

- **Tuesday, November 14: Invite Parents to School Day.** Encourage parents to spend the day with their child at school to emphasize the importance of parental involvement.
- **Wednesday, November 15: Education Support Professionals Day.** Recognize the secretaries, classroom aides, maintenance people, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, and others who provide invaluable services to schools and students.
- **Thursday, November 16: Educator for a Day.** Invite community leaders to serve as an educator to get a glimpse of a day in the life of a school employee.
- **Friday, November 17: Substitute Educators Day.** Honor the educators who are called upon to substitute for regularly employed teachers and other school employees.

To help you plan these celebration days, the NEA has developed an online toolkit with background information, and activity ideas, as well as downloadable resources, templates, and promotional materials. Just log on to the NEA website at: www.nea.org/aew/toolkit.html.



The BuckStop

Greg Wall, Treasurer

Welcome back and I hope you are all having a great and involved fall season. Just a short note on your yearly dues from this August '06 to the end of the school year: the amount taken out of ten separate checks will be \$724 if you are a fulltime employee. This amount should divide out to be \$72.40 per check. The dates of the checks when this is planned to occur will be 8/28, 9/21, 10/21, 11/16, 12/28, 1/25, 2/23, 3/22, 4/19, 5/17. Keep in mind that this total is not the amount that can be deducted from your taxes for 2006. More on that total will be coming in the future.

You should also know that your local WAWMEA takes 11% of your dues, with NEA using 20%, WSC consuming 28% and WEAC coming in at 41%. Please be aware that these organizations need your personal involvement as well as your funds to be successful.

Any problems? Please know and contact your building rep. Thanks!

Classified Ads in the WORD

As you know, the West Allis-West Milwaukee Education Association sponsors several high school scholarships each year for seniors in our District who wish to pursue a degree in education. Fundraising can be a difficult and timely process, with the many other obligations that we all have throughout the year. It is with that in mind that we will be implementing a new **Member-to-Member Advertising Service** for Association members to place ads in our newsletter, *The Word*. It is hoped that this can provide us with another source of income for this worthwhile cause. Remember that *The Word* comes

to you both as a hard copy and on-line at our website: www.wawmea.org.

Our new advertising service will have two sections, one which offers items for sale and the second which will be for services or items wanted. The cost for ad placement will be as follows: \$10 for 20 words or less, \$15 for 21 to 40 words, half-rate for each consecutive edition that an ad is run (\$5 for 20 words or less; \$7.50 for 21 to 40 words) Advertising will be limited to members only; that's a special assurance as to the quality of items or services offered because these ads are posted by our colleagues who work right here in the District. We can also include home email addresses, which will provide an automatic link from our website for

people who have interest in a particular ad & want further information. But here's the really great thing: All money raised will be put toward the WA-WMEA Scholarship fund!

Ads should be sent to me at my home email: herbswawmea2@wi.rr.com. Checks should be made out to: **WA-WMEA Scholarship Fund** and either sent or delivered to me at Franklin School. I will need to receive ad submissions *no later than 1 week prior* to the date the newsletter is closed. Please note: We reserve the right to edit ads for spelling and to limit the \$15 ads to a maximum of 40 words.

So get busy cleaning out those closets and make a pile of unused items to sell. (Those items that you consider to be junk could be someone else's treasure.) Think about promoting your son or daughter's babysitting business or snow-shoveling skills. (They'll appreciate your efforts to get them off of the home computer.) And consider helping to provide a scholarship to some of our students by placing an ad in *The Word*.



Remembering Mark Jones

Our District recently lost a fine teacher and colleague. On October 23, Central science teacher Mark Jones succumbed to his battle with cancer. He was only 52 years old. It seemed fitting to pay tribute to him by asking several close friends from the Science Department to share some of their memories. Jay Janiszewski and Jim Kurovsky said that they would be honored to provide a few thoughts about their fellow teacher and buddy.

Mark ran a very traditional, structured class, despite having an unconventional teaching style. He began the school year by hooking up an elaborate sound system complete with strobe lights. He would turn the lights in his room out and then hide behind his desk, using a remote control to blast the music from the movie *2001: A Space Odyssey*. He would then rise very slowly to the tympani pounding away until he was at full standing position with his arm outstretched. That experience surely captured his students' attention, while piquing their interest about what was yet to come.

Mark always had the perfect paper, worksheet, or test handy from "former student" Ann Swerkey. He would show off Ann's paper while talking about how well she had done in his class, noting that she never got even one question wrong. It took the kids, as well as any new teacher, weeks to figure out that Ann Swerkey was really "Answer Key."

Mark ended each class period with a "Song of the Day." Kids would put in a request for a song, and if Mark had it (which he usually did; Mark had an expansive CD collection), he would play it—accompanied by his skillful playing of a cowbell.

You can tell from reading these few anecdotes that Mark's style was very endearing to his students. He affected and influenced the lives of so many, both in his role as teacher and also as a coach. Kids loved and respected him because he demanded their best each day. Mark's curriculum was rigorous—one of the toughest at Central—and he never gave up on any student...or anything, for that matter. One colleague of his noted that Mark never missed a day of school last year, despite going through chemotherapy treatments. When congratulated on receiving the Perfect Attendance Award, his comment was "If I give in to this thing, then I let it win." That speaks to the kind of man that Mark was.

Mark is survived by his wife, JoAnn, and daughters Kathryn, Elizabeth, and Sarah. Central Principal Jack Padek reports that there will be a sponsored scholarship or some other special event established in his name. We can all appreciate the legacy that fellow educator Mark Jones has left us with: to never give up, and to expect the nothing but best from others because we expect the same from ourselves.

-Lynn Herbst, PR Director-

Thank You

Angela Bina, Membership Chair

A big "Thank You" to all Building Reps who helped distribute information sheets, checked on the status of returns, and then got them back to me. It's a big job to handle, and your help made my job so much easier!

Please continue to update me with information changes, such as employment status, leaves (family or medical), and personal information. As always, if you have any questions, just call or email.



Getting to Know Our Members

Lynn Herbst, PR Director

Recently, Coach Scott Otto did something that hadn't been done since 1989: he got the Hale Huskies football team into the playoffs. Although they lost to Franklin, it was still quite an achievement for the Huskies and their coach. (MEMBERS cont. p5)

So how did Scott get the team to go that far? Did all that magic come from him? Well, perhaps, with a little help and support from his family.

Scott has been coaching since 1993, when he was a senior at Central. He has been a phy-ed and health teacher in the District for the past nine years, and has been based at Hale for the past two years. His wife Jenny, who was a great resource for this story, has been teaching third grade at Franklin Elementary for the past eight years. She always knew what she was up against, since she started dating Scott when she was a high school senior...back when he used to coach three sports. Now she describes her life during the football season as being like that of a "single Mom." Scott is gone every day all year, either with coaching-related activities or working with students in the Weight Room. There are football camps in the summer with actual training beginning in August.

But there's more "Otto" to this story. Scott's dad, Dennis, is the head

statistician for the team. His mom, Kathy, is in charge of videotaping and photography during the games. Son Josh, age 5-½, is the ball boy and the water boy for the team. Son Brian, age 15, is a sophomore who plays defense for the varsity team.

Jenny reports that "coaching is in Scott's blood." Although they have three sons together, Scott will often say that he has 74+ sons, since he really takes the boys on his team under his wing and feels like he is a father-figure to them. Jenny is very proud of him, but she knows that her husband feels there is more to do...which means that he won't be satisfied until he gets his boys to the state tournament. In the meantime, Jenny offers a few words of wisdom to others with spouses who coach: Be patient...because the season never ends.

By the way, 1-½ year old son Ben also attends the games, but he hasn't been assigned a job...yet.



Scott and Jenny on the field.

From the Editor:

Comments, suggestions for improving this publication are always welcome.

Articles for the newsletter can be submitted to sandhill@centurytel.net or via interdepartmental mail to Irving School.

Deadline for the next newsletter is **December 14, 2006.**

Kathryn Popa

Member-to-Member Advertisements

Items or Services Wanted

☞ I am looking for a gently used X-box, Playstation 2 or Gamecube video system. Contact Nance Hluchnik at 262-796-1509.

Items or Services For Sale

☞ 4/4 Pfritschner Cello. 10 years old, mint condition. Laminated wood front and back, Brazilian wood bow, hard side carrying case and other extras included. Asking \$2,600.00. Call 262-679-9541 or e-mail [jrabad5888@aol.com](mailto:jrabid5888@aol.com).

☞ 2002 Xtra Cab 4x4 V6 Toyota Tacoma. White with black trim; very clean. Manual transmission/ SR5 package. TRD Off-road package, sunroof, cruise, lined cab, & much more. 30,000 miles. \$14,000. Call 262 547-6767 or email herbswawmea2@wi.rr.com.

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