

The Word

JANUARY
2008



A Message From Our President **Beth Ludeman**

Citizen? Taxpayer? Which Will It Be?

Due to our two-week winter break, I had the opportunity to assist in chaperoning a group of students from Waukesha as they conducted a field study of the Iowa caucuses for their Advanced Placement government and politics class. The excitement of the students (and other teachers) as observers of the process, as well as that of the caucus participants, was an inspiration I feel fortunate to have shared. And it reminded me of the importance of the political process to our own local association elections.

As I'm sure you are aware if you were paying attention to the media coverage, the turnout of participants, at least when it came to the Democratic caucuses, was double the historical average and expectation. And it's not as if the Dems' caucuses are an easy form of representative democracy: you can't just show up at the polling place and cast a ballot; it is a process that takes a couple of hours. Participants listen to speeches for candidates and then must physically demonstrate their support by joining others to meet a threshold number, based on the total number of registered caucus goers.

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WAWMEA
Highly Qualified Teachers
Who Care About Kids!

Democracy isn't easy or pretty, but it's totally worth it. Yes, participating takes an effort. And it takes fortitude to become a candidate for office, but I'd argue that each one of us, as a public school employee, has the resolve it takes to step up as a candidate for our association elections. The challenges we face each day in the classrooms and school buildings we work in, with our students, with our administrators, with public perceptions, strengthen our skills in all other aspects of our lives. My niece gifted me with a set of coasters a couple of years back that spell out "Teachers Lead The Way", and they are a regular reminder to me that all of us have a profound impact on others. That keeps me mindful of just how important it is to be engaged in shaping the issues that swirl around us beyond our individual classrooms.

As I prepare to leave the office of our local presidency, my greatest concern about our association lies in what I have seen occur societally over the last couple of decades: that is, forces have persuaded people to think of themselves only as taxpayers, not as citizens. Taxpayers play a relatively passive role in society; they pay for services. Citizens are active participants in the society they inhabit. They not only pay taxes (OK, we call them "dues" in WA-WMEA), they participate in the life of the republic by voting and sometimes by running for elective office.

That is one of the more potent elements of the example of the Iowa caucuses. It's citizenry in action, and it's downright inspiring. I have a more hopeful view of the direction in which our country is moving because it is clear that there are more citizens engaged in the process. Republican or Democrat, the theme seems to be change, and not just for change's sake, for the benefit of the whole.

I urge each one of you, regardless of whether this is your first or 35th year as a member of the West Allis-West Milwaukee Education Association, to consider running for a position locally. Ask any member of the Executive Board how they first got involved, and they will tell you it was (probably) head first, and it proved to be the best way to really know the organization inside out. I consider myself very fortunate to have been able to serve the membership in a variety of capacities over the last ten years, and now it is time for me to move on to other challenges. I would ask all of you who have expressed your gratitude to an association leader who helped you through a challenge, or answered a question about the contract, or reminded you about your benefits, to return the favor and get involved in the life of our society, the WA-WMEA.

What role will you play, taxpayer or citizen?

NOMINATION information and the NOMINATION BALLOT are included at the end of this issue, page 5.



PR&R

Nancy Nienhuis and Peggy Oberbeck

I Know:

- ..where I fall on the salary schedule. Yes No
- ..how many units I need and when I need to turn them in.(or that I don't need units) Yes No
- ..that I need to submit unit proposals and verify them annually Yes No
- ..that I need to submit course approval forms every time I take a class Yes No
(or program approval for masters program)

If you answered NO to any of these questions please see your building rep. and check out unit information and more on our website at ... wawmea.org

Please let us know if you run in to any problems with this process. Contact your building rep. and Peggy Oberbeck (secondary) or Nancy Nienhuis (Elementary).

Upcoming Items of Interest

Lynn Herbst

Public Relations Chair

Noted **education expert Dr. Mel Levine** will discuss his scientifically supported approach to dealing with individual learning differences at a February 22 event at Cardinal Stritch University.

One graduate credit is available through Stritch's University Outreach Department in a session immediately following the presentation. Participants may also register for credit at the event. The event will include an 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. presentation, with an optional graduate credit session to follow. A continental breakfast and lunch are included. The cost

is \$150 for preferred seating, \$125 for general admission seating, and an \$150 for one graduate credit. The registration deadline is February 15. To purchase tickets online, visit www.milwaukee moms.com/mp/events or call (414) 647-4734. For more information, contact the University Outreach Department at (800) 347-8822, ext. 4428 or at conted@stritch.edu.

This year, **NEA's Read Across America Day will be celebrated on March 3.**

So why should you bother to celebrate it? Read Across America is dedicated to building a nation of readers, not just on RAA Day, but all year long. It is designed to keep reading on the radar for students of

ALL ages. What can you do? Go to the RAA web site:

www.nea.org/readacross. You will find an online toolkit, an expanded literacy calendar, booklists, and links to RAA partners. Additionally, you can sign up for the monthly Read Across America e-newsletter. It is designed to keep you connected while providing ideas that you can use to motivate your students—and what better time than during these winter months after the holidays? Many ideas and suggestions can help you to design a great week of reading lessons across the curriculum. Invite parents and community members into your classrooms as guest readers who can share with

students the importance of reading as a lifelong skill. Make your reading multigenerational by inviting retirees to read or setting up a reading event at a local retirement home. Share your special events by taking digital photographs which can be shared through our website or via *The Word*.

“Teaching the Holocaust: Lessons for the Future” is the title of two-day workshops offered by the Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center. The workshops will be held on March 2-3, and are open to middle and high school teachers. They will focus on pedagogical strategies to teach about the history and ethical issues of the Holocaust, critical thinking skills, integrating literature and the arts, and learning experiences that are relevant to our contemporary world. For more information or registration information, contact Bonnie Shafrin at (414) 963-2719 or at bonnies@milwaukeejewish.org.

Who, you? That’s right...ALL current members of an NEA local affiliate or bargaining unit are eligible to be nominated by WEAC for the **NEA’s Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE) Award for Teaching Excellence. April 7 is the deadline for submissions.** Under this program, Wisconsin selects one nominee and submits that person’s name to the NFIE. The NFIE then selects six national winners. Wisconsin’s nominee receives a \$1,000 cash award from WEAC and also can attend, at no cost, the Salute to Excellence in Education Event, which will be held in Washington, D.C. in February 2009. The nominee also becomes eligible

for other cash awards up to \$25,000. If you are interested, visit www.weac.org/News/2007-08/jan08/NFIE.htm for additional details and criteria.

The University of Wisconsin-Stout is offering an Early Childhood Education Conference, April 24-26. The conference is for anyone teaching or working with young children from in-home child care providers to third grade teachers. Other continuing education options for online CEUs are also offered. For more information go to www.uwstout.edu/outreach/conf/ee/.

The Buck Stop Greg Wall Treasurer

My run as your WAWMEA Treasurer will end in June '08. I look forward to working with the new treasurer this year to help get that person started in the right direction. If you are interested in the position or want to nominate someone please notify Julie Stringer. It is a two year position and there is a stipend involved for being on the Executive Board as Treasurer.

The amount a fulltime teacher can deduct from their taxes is \$734 for the 2007 tax year. Please look at your last check stub in December 2007 to verify this amount. Let us all have a rewarding and safe year.

Negotiations Chad Lehman Negotiations Chair

The Bargaining Team will continue to meet with the district to work on the 2007-2009 contract. The following are upcoming dates for bargaining: January 17, 25, 26, 29, and 31.

This year, most of the sessions are being held outside of the school day to reduce the amount of time teachers are out of the classroom during negotiations. We are making steady progress and hope to continue making strides towards an agreement.

January

14

WAWM Board of Education -
ADM BLDG 7:00 pm
Franklin School

16

WSC Representative Assembly-
UEP 4:30 pm - Bob Burke,
Government Relations Director
for WEAC will speak on the
2008 Political Landscape.

22

PDP Certification for the
Professional/Veteran Teacher
5:00 UEP

28

WAWM Board of Education -
ADM BLDG 7:00 pm
Hoover School



2008

Nominations for Association officers are being sought for the upcoming spring elections. Duties of the open offices according to the Constitution are described below. The name(s) of the person(s) presently holding each position are also listed.

PRESIDENT & AUTOMATIC DELEGATE TO NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

(1 year term)

Current President - Beth Ludeman

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Executive Committee and Representative Council and shall perform such other duties as may be imposed by the provisions of this constitution. The President shall appoint the chairpersons and members of standing committees and special committees subject to the approval of the Executive Board and be ex officio member of all standing committees. The President shall arrange for publication and distribution of internal information concerning Association matters. The President shall represent the Association before the public either personally or through delegates. The President shall represent the West Allis-West Milwaukee Education Association as a delegate to the National Education Association Delegate Assembly.

VICE-PRESIDENT

(1 year term)

Current Vice-President – Jeff Sikich

The Vice-President shall assist the Executive Committee and the President at the latter's request and shall preside at all meetings in the President's absence.

TREASURER

(2 year term)

Current Treasurer- Greg Wall

The Treasurer shall hold the funds of the Association and disburse them upon authorization by the Executive Committee. The Treasurer shall bill the members for their annual dues per capita tax, collect them through the Membership Committee in each building and transmit accounts due the Wisconsin Education Association Council. The Treasurer shall keep accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements, shall report to each meeting of the Representative Council, and shall prepare an annual financial statement for publication to members as directed by the Executive Committee. The Treasurer shall keep the President and Executive Committee informed of the financial condition of the Association, shall assist the Budget Committee in the initial drafting of the annual budget and shall file such reports with the Internal Revenue Service of the Department of Labor as required by law.

TWO ASSOCIATION DIRECTORS

(2 year terms)

Current Directors – Christine Morrissey and Angela Bina - (terms end in 2008)
Maureen Marek and Linda Wamboldt - (terms end in 2009)

The Association Director serves on the Executive Board and acts as the President’s liaison to the standing committees of the Association

ONE DIRECTOR TO UNISERV BOARD WEST SUBURBAN COUNCIL

(3 year term)

Current Directors

Julie Stringer (term ends 2008 appointed for Kathy Popa- retired) Beth Ludeman (term ends 2009) Linda Weaver (term ends in 2010)

The Director will attend the monthly meeting of the West Suburban Council Board of Directors.

WEST SUBURBAN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY - 15 DELEGATES

(2 year term)

(We are entitled to a total of 26 delegates)

The delegates will attend three meetings a year to discuss UniServ business.
Meetings traditionally occur the third Wednesday of October, January and May

Current Delegates (Term ends in 2008)

Jeff Sikich, Julie Stringer, Lynn Herbst, Cathi Probst, Christine Morrissey, Chad Lehman, Nancy Nienhuis, Sabley Sabin, Sue Johnson, Larry Leinberger, Maureen Marek, Michelle Wolaver, Kathy Ceel, Kelley Stendler, and Nicole Ostowski

Term ends in 2009

Gail Citowitz-Placzek, Peggy Oberbeck, Eden Klug, Anglea Bina, Jamie Mikula, Linda Bolton, Michelle Daavettila, Kory Higgins, Bob Kuenzi, Mary Kay Van Derra

DELEGATES TO WEAC REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

(2 year term)

(We are entitled to a total of 13 delegates)

The 2008 WEAC Representative Assembly will be held May 2nd - May 4th in Madison, Wisconsin

Current Delegates

Term ended for Nancy Nienhuis, Peggy Oberbeck Kathy Ceel, Jill Miller, Jeff Sikich, Lynn Herbst, Chris Morrissey, Beth Ludeman, Linda Weaver, Chad Lehman, Bridget Geboy-Helfenstein, Kris Franzke, Korie Wishart,

DELEGATES TO NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

(1 year term)

(We are entitled to a total of 4 delegates)

One delegate will be the elected president

Delegates were Peggy Oberbeck, Maureen Marek, Michelle Daavettila and Beth Ludeman

The requirement for this position is that the persons elected will attend all the days of the NEA Representative Assembly to be held in Washington (July 1st - July 6th, 2008). Our Association’s budget includes full funding for all four delegates.

These nominations must be returned to Julie Stringer at Walker School or to the Association office by Wednesday, January 23rd 2008. Additional nominations will only be accepted at the February 13th 2008 RA if the nominee is present to accept the nomination or has accepted said nomination in writing.

WEST ALLIS-WEST MILWAUKEE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION NOMINATIONS

PRESIDENT

VICE-PRESIDENT

TREASURER

ASSOCIATION DIRECTORS

WSC DIRECTOR

WSC REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY DELEGATES

WEAC RA DELEGATES

NEA RA DELEGATES

Name of person making nominations _____

Note: the name of any member may be placed in nomination. The Elections Committee will contact those persons nominated.

January 7, 2008