

The Word

MARCH
2010



Your Vote Counts: April 6, 2010

Take advantage of Early Bird and Absentee Voting

Find out about local races for school board in your home school district. WAWMEA recommends that members request an absentee ballot now to ease voting and assure their vote is counted. In 2004, Wisconsin made changes in the law for absentee voting to allow any registered voter to vote by absentee ballot. You can apply for an absentee ballot in your municipal clerk's office. You must vote immediately, seal your ballot and return it to a member of the clerk's staff.

The legislative committee of WAWMEA, recently conducted interviews with all six candidates running for WAWM School Board. The committee was impressed with all six candidates, but felt that there were three standouts. On March 22nd, the committee endorsed George Sotiros, Annette Frymark and Susan Stalewski.

For members living in West Allis, Absentee ballot information for the city of West Allis can be found on the City Clerk's page at (http://www.ci.west-allis.wi.us/clerk/clerk_ballots.htm)

Vote now to assure that WAWMEA members have the greatest possible impact in this important election.

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WAWMEA
Highly Qualified Teachers
Who Care About Kids!



The WEA Showcase Welcomes WEAC Members' Artwork

Are you a WEAC member with a flair for art? Would you like to have your art on exhibit and possibly purchased?

The WEA Trust invites WEAC members from across the state to submit art for our biannual Art Showcase. The Showcase recognizes the talents and abilities of WEAC members, displaying art in our offices during the late summer and early fall.

The Showcase runs August 9 to October 28, culminating with a reception at our offices the evening of the 28th. The reception coincides with the annual WEAC convention at the Alliant Energy Center.

Preregister by April 12

If you would like to submit a piece of art for the Showcase, you must preregister by April 12, 2010. Click [here](#) to indicate your intention to enter art in the 2010 WEA Art Showcase.

Any WEAC member is eligible to submit art, including WEAC-Retired members. Each artist may submit up to two works. All mediums are acceptable.

Purchase awards available

Purchase awards will be granted by the Trust and WEAC for the purchase of a select number of works to be added to their respective collections.



All art work must be hand delivered to the Trust offices, 45 Nob Hill Road, Madison, WI 53713, from June 14 through June 25 (no Saturday or Sunday delivery).

WEA will display qualifying entries from August 9 to October 28. The public will be invited and encouraged to attend.

The Myth of the "Powerful" Teachers' Union By David Macaray

There's a myth circulating out there that not only threatens to ruin the reputation of America's school teachers, but has the potential to side-track any realistic hopes of education reform. It's the assertion that "powerful" teachers' unions are responsible for the decline of public education in the United States in general, and California in particular.

In this article Macaray lays out some pretty important facts that are not told by critics of public education and teacher unions. One myth he takes on is that because of the union, bad teachers don't get fired. However...

* In Georgia, where 92.5% of the teachers are non-union, only 0.5% of tenured/post probationary teachers get fired.

* In South Carolina, where 100% of the teachers are non-union, it's 0.32%.

* In North Carolina, where 97.7% are non-union, a miniscule .03% of tenured/post-probationary teachers get fired—the exact same percentage as California.

Are teachers in those states better than in unionized states? Macaray's entire article is worth the time to read. You can view it at (<http://www.counterpunch.org/macaray03202009.html>).

Funding Cliff?

When the state Legislature used stimulus funds to cover cuts made in K-12 education last year, the move sent many school districts toward a funding cliff including West Allis - West Milwaukee.

With no answer on how to maintain funding for positions that were created or maintained with stimulus money after the 2010-11 school year, many districts will look toward Madison for a solution or face significant cuts.

In 2009 - 2010 the State reduced the per pupil allocation from \$275 to \$200, a twenty-seven percent reduction in WAWM District funding. The State also cut equalization aid by almost five and half percent more. The WAWM School District used half of one-time stimulus money to fund the current school year, in order to avoid significant program cuts that would affect our students.

The remainder of the one-time stimulus will be used for the 2010 - 2011 school year so that the WAWM District can maintain programs already in place.

Right now, the 2011 - 2013 budget year looks bleak without some kind of school funding reform. Under the current formula the WAWM School District may realize a shortfall of over six million dollars.

School funding continues to be WEAC's number one priority, and you can help in Moving Education Forward by joining actions in your community to raise awareness of



school funding reform. April 19-23 is Education Forward Action Week, a way for us to show how school funding problems have impacted our schools. We need to show our district's parents and family members that class sizes are growing and course offerings are being cut back. We need to explain to our state legislators that the state school funding formula is putting too much of a burden on local taxpayers to fund education. In short, our students need your help. Participate in actions planned in your district.

The first action as part of the "Moving Education Forward" effort is for your local union to do an assessment of how school funding has affected your school and to have your colleagues and community members sign a resolution supporting reform. The next action is to engage the community in why school funding reform is needed. And the third action is to tell lawmakers what they can do to help our state's students.

There is much we can do to "Move Education Forward," and it's time to take the next step. Sandy Nass, Executive Director of the WSC UniServ and Jeff Sikich, President-WAWMEA have information about actions being organized to educate our community and our lawmakers. We need a better way to fund our schools. Reach out to see how you can help

out. You can visit www.weac.org/schoolfunding to learn more about how we're Moving Education Forward.

Win tickets for your class to attend Weather Day at Miller Park April 28

The Milwaukee Brewers and TMJ4 are teaming up for a day of fun and learning at Miller Park, and, as a WEAC member, you can win free tickets for you and your entire class to attend Weather Day on April 28.

All you need to do to qualify is tell us why your class would like to attend Weather Day at Miller Park. Simply comment below or on the WEAC Facebook Page (<http://www.facebook.com/MyWEAC>).

The entry deadline is noon, April 7. Be sure to provide your name and your school so we can contact you. The winner will be randomly selected from among those who enter comments. Amy Gigure's (West Milwaukee Intermediate School) entry was quoted in Bill Hurley's Blog on the WEAC site.

The Milwaukee Brewers are donating the tickets. WEAC will help cover transportation costs for your school district to bus students to the game and back. Weather Day activities commence at 9:30 a.m., and the game begins at 12:10 p.m. Please check with your school officials to make sure your class can participate in this activity before entering the contest.