

DIRECTIONS

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MEMBERS WARM TO WALKER RECALL

Word spread quickly after WEAC, the Democratic Party, United Wisconsin and other groups committed to the November 15 start of the recall efforts against Governor Walker. Their action of many of our members was, “We are ready, now.”

Two months into a new school year, members are feeling the impact of the state drawback from education in their schools and they are feeling the salary and health care losses take their toll on their families.

They are ready for a change of governors.

They are ready to elect a governor who will listen to all of his citizens, not just a select few. They are ready for a governor who finds ways to help schools not undermine them. They are ready for a governor who can actually appear in public instead of sneaking into back doors just to go to a meeting.

Who’s Running Against Him? While it seems like this question should be answered before the recall effort begins, a good rationale can be made for not doing so: If the main issue in the election is Walker himself, he loses because his popularity is so low. The Walker campaign will spend tens of millions of dollars to try to change the subject. They will attempt to discredit whoever runs against him, whether it’s Jon Erpenbach, Tom Barrett, Kathleen Falk, Dave Obey, or someone else. No point in giving them a head start.

Member Involvement. You will hear more about union involvement in coming days, but you have to remember that it’s not just the unions against Walker, it’s Wisconsin against Walker. He hasn’t just gone after schools and working people. He’s gone after health care for older people, the environment, college students, and unlucky voters who don’t have identification cards. If you’re ready now to help or to donate, go to the United Wisconsin website to find out how. <http://www.unitedwisconsin.com/>.

Timeline. We need about 540,000 signatures by January 14. Then there will be a three or four month

campaign in which Governor Walker will be free to attract and spend unlimited funds. The election will probably be held in April or May. We will celebrate, but not too long. The Senate, split 17-16 in Walker’s favor will be up for grabs whether or not any recalls occur there. The Assembly will have to wait until November of next year. Democrats hold only 39 out of 99 seats and will have to win 11 more Assembly seats to become the majority.

FINANCIAL SEMINARS OFFERED

Use the power of knowledge to help take control of your financial future. Register for one or both of these free financial seminars by calling 800/397-2287 or e-mail joshffm@weac.org.

Wednesday, November 16

CAUS Office, 4800 Ivywood Trail, McFarland

5:30 p.m. **Finances 101: Seven Mistakes New Members Make with Their Money**

6:30 p.m. Light dinner provided

7:00 p.m. **The Basic’s of Budgeting and Saving**

CAUS T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE

CAUS-North and South members are finding ways to show unity. T-Shirts and Polo Shirts are now available through the CAUS office which do just that! The shirts will be bright red with white lettering. To view the printing and to obtain an order form go to www.weac.org/caus-north/ and click “Documents”. You will find a T-Shirt order form that you can download and send to the CAUS office.

THE LAW & GRIEVANCES

For many of us, the future of our work lives seems very uncertain. What rights will we have without an enforceable collective bargaining agreement (CBA)? This article is the first in a series of articles we will be providing through this newsletter on issues that have traditionally been covered in your CBA.

Act 10 requires that all School Districts establish a grievance procedure by October 1, 2011. All of our locals have CBA extensions for this year, so your CURRENT grievance procedure is still in place and should be used if you think your CBA has been violated.

While the new procedures vary greatly from District to District, three elements are required for all grievance procedures under the new law. At a minimum, the procedures must be available for disputes regarding discipline, dismissal, and safety. Most CBA grievance procedures cover pretty much everything that is in the agreement. The remaining two requirements flip what occurs in most contracts. Under a CBA, a school board hearing is the second to last step in the process with final in the hands of an impartial arbitrator. Act 10 flips that by requiring the second to last step to be with an impartial hearing examiner then the board has the final say.

These requirements mean that the procedure is unlikely to be viewed by our members as a fair process. However, we can and should advocate to make sure all issues in both the handbook and board policy are grievable; the selection of a hearing examiner is done with input from the union; and the costs for grieving are shared by the union and management (not just by the grievant); and requires that the school board be required to follow standards for overturning recommendations of the impartial hearing examiner.

POSTCARDS STILL AVAILABLE

CAUS-North post-cards are still available, free of charge, to all our members. Descriptions and order forms can be found on our website at www.weac.org/caus-north/. These cards provide positive communication to parents and students. The postcards are 4-1/4" x 5-1/2" on colored card stock. There is enough space to write a message. The other side is blank for mailing purposes.

CAUS-North will supply you with as many cards as you are interested in any-time during the year. The postcards are usually sent along with a member at one of the CAUS-N meetings in order to keep postage costs down.

AUSTRALIA AND WISCONSIN - NOT SO DIFFERENT

“You are not alone,” was the message Maurie Mulheron brought to the October CAUS-North Board of Directors meeting. Mulheron, the incoming president of the 70,000 member New South Wales Teachers Federation in Australia, was in Wisconsin on a multi-state US tour.

Mulheron assured the Board that union members in Australia had been closely following events in Wisconsin and drawing strength from them. He displayed a vivid photo of Sydney, with teachers massed in front of the Parliament Building engaging in a one-day strike last month. As everyone was dressed in red, it looked strikingly similar to a Wisconsin rally.

Mulheron said that he felt a special kinship for Wisconsin because of our destructive private school voucher program, which drains away large amounts of money and resources from the public schools. He pointed out that in Australia it is even worse, with 70% of public monies flowing into private, mostly religious schools.

Other events on Mulheron’s four-day Wisconsin itinerary included meetings with Milwaukee Teachers Education Association President Bob Peterson (who had been to Australia previously to meet with him), CAUS-North UniServ Director Glenn Schmidt (who knew him from a World Congress in Brazil in 2004) and DPI International Relations Consultant Gerhard Fischer.

Mulheron experienced a very personal highlight singing and playing guitar at the daily Capitol protest sing-along with WEAC President Mary Bell. Mulheron, a folk musician with several albums to his credit, was energized by the more than 100 participants at the sing-along.

He also played guitar for Marsha Herman’s first grade class at Westside Elementary in Sun Prairie. He loved the way she made sure every student was engaged and valued, and was shocked to learn that Herman, the 2011 Wisconsin State Elementary Teacher of the Year, had endured a \$6,000 pay cut for her efforts.

“That says it all about your governor, doesn’t it?” he mused.

After his Wisconsin visit Mulheron headed to Washington, DC for some meetings with NEA, then he moves on to New York, England, and Ireland before returning to Sydney to take the reins of the New South Wales Teachers’ Federation.