

# Keeping in Touch



## Message From the President

By Bob Henning, WEAC-Retired President

Fellow members, as this membership year opens, we have a lot of work to do. We must be engaged to help save Wisconsin as we knew it. A state that was owned by the people with clean politics, local control, and strong democratic principles has been stolen by big corporations and people that do not live in Wisconsin. We all know that great public schools are an investment in our society and the future economic growth of our state. By privatizing education we destroy the foundation of our great democracy. Hopefully we will have the power, drive and dedication to continue this fight.



As we start looking at fewer resources to do the work that needs to be done, we need to commit more of our time and energy to fight for great public schools. This year we will see many changes, not only to our organization, but to WEAC itself. Last Spring the WEAC-Retired Board of Directors passed a motion to form a Task Force to look at our structure and how we deliver services to the membership. In September the Board approved the Task Force appointments, and, in November, the Task Force presented its preliminary recommendations to the Board. Because changes to the WEAC-R Constitution and By-laws and Policy Handbook must be voted on by the entire membership, a final draft will be presented to

the Board in February before being passed on to the general membership for a vote. We hope you will approve the changes so that we can move forward.

If you have any questions, please contact your local chapter or any of the WEAC-Retired officers listed on our website [www.weac.org/MemberCommunities.aspx](http://www.weac.org/MemberCommunities.aspx). You can email me at [rhenning4065@gmail.com](mailto:rhenning4065@gmail.com) or call me at 715-571-4065 and I will be happy to discuss any issues with you.

Have a great year and please offer as much help as you can to any of the actives in your area. They need all the help they can get to win back the rights we worked for so long ago. With many hands we can win this fight for great public schools.

### Annual Membership Meeting Announcement

The annual WEAC-Retired General Membership meeting will be held at 2:15 p.m. on May 18, 2012 at the Madison Sheraton, following the annual conference. Members do not have to attend the conference in order to attend the general membership meeting.

## Here's Betsy



As many of you are aware, Governor Walker's attack on unions has had a significant impact on WEAC resources that are available to advocate for and with our members. In October, WEAC had to lay-off 40 staff members

due to budget reductions. WEAC-Retired has been impacted by these cuts. Dustin Beilke was the WEAC-Retired Affiliate Coordinator and has taken a job with Madison Teachers Incorporated. Becky Adams was the associate staff support for WEAC-Retired and has decided to retire. We thank them for their service and wish them both well in their new endeavors.

As we adjust to the new staffing levels and adjustments, WEAC-Retired has made adjustments to the budget and formed a task force to address operational issues. At this time, Betsy Kippers, WEAC Vice President, has been assigned to WEAC-Retired as the governance liaison and she will be supporting our work. If you have general questions please contact Betsy at [kippersb@weac.org](mailto:kippersb@weac.org) or call 1-800-362-8034 ext. 289. If you have membership questions, please contact WEAC membership at [membership@weac.org](mailto:membership@weac.org) or call 1-800-362-8034 ext. 507.

Thank you for your patience as WEAC continues to move forward in this new environment.

## 4X10=40

### Ways to Reclaim Wisconsin

Governor Scott Walker has the wrong priorities for Wisconsin. He cut \$1.6 billion from public schools while giving \$200 million in tax breaks to corporations and the wealthy. This has had a devastating effect on our public schools.

Wisconsin has long had a culture of teamwork, collaboration, and respect for one another, especially when it comes to our public schools. From our public schools to our tradition of good government, there has always been a sense of pride in the way we do things. But Governor Walker's uncompromising, undemocratic approach has divided Wisconsin by imposing harmful budget cuts and extreme legislation designed to silence the voices of Wisconsin citizens.

Clearly Governor Walker is wrong for Wisconsin. It's time to reclaim our state - and we can do that by recalling Governor Walker.

To succeed in recalling Governor Walker we need your help! There are four simple things we can all do to help. It's called "The 4X10 Program."

#### What Can you Do?

- Collect 10 recall signatures
- Donate or raise \$10 for the WEAC recommended candidate for Governor
- Reach out to 10 friends, family and neighbors and get them to vote
- Give 10 hours of time to help with the effort

I know many of you will give your all to make this effort a success. Let's Reclaim Wisconsin in 2012!

For more information about how to join in these efforts please contact Diane Craney at [craneyd@weac.org](mailto:craneyd@weac.org), or by calling 1-800-362-8034 ext.256.

### 2011-12 WEAC-Retired Calendar of Events

<b>Jan. 2012</b>	12	WEAC Retired Board of Directors Conference Call
<b>Feb. 2012</b>	1	Postmark deadline for WEAC RA and NEA RA delegate nominations and WEAC Retired rep to the WEAC Board of Directors nomination
	17	WEAC-Retired Board of Directors
	17-19	WEAC Board of Directors
<b>Mar. 2012</b>	1	WEAC RA and NEA RA delegate ballots mailed (if necessary) WEAC-Retired rep to the WEAC Board ballots mailed Officer delegate nomination information mailed
<b>Apr. 2012</b>	1	WEAC RA, NEA RA & WEAC Board of directors rep ballots due
	20	Pre-RA meeting of WEAC-Retired delegates
	20-22	WEAC Representative Assembly

# Protect Our Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS)

There have been many questions and concerns about the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) and the study directed by 2011 Wisconsin Act 32. The study has serious impact for both active and annuitant WRS participants. This Act directs a study of the structure and benefits of the WRS, specifically addressing the following: Creating an optional defined contribution plan and allowing employees the option to withhold required contribution and limit those employees to a money purchase annuity. At this time, this is just a study and no legislation has been drafted. This study will inform the legislature about the current structure of the system as well as provide comparative information to other state retirement systems.

## *Here are some facts about the Wisconsin Retirement System*

- ◆ It's the pension plan for employees of most public school districts and state and local governments.
- ◆ The state department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) manages the system while its assets are invested by the State of Wisconsin Investment Board (SWIB).
- ◆ It has over \$79 billion in assets. The assets are invested by SWIB for the benefits of WRS members.
- ◆ It's a hybrid pension plan with both defined benefit and defined contribution components.

## *What's the concern?*

- ◆ Act 32 continues the onslaught of anti-public worker attacks by Walker, and Republicans still control all branches of the state government.
- ◆ The study's results will be reported to Walker and the Joint Finance Committee. The study is not required to be reported to the Joint Survey Committee on Retirement Systems that was formed to make recommendations on legislation that affects retirement & pension plans.
- ◆ Permitting employees to opt out of the WRS siphons off contributions. Decreased contributions would reduce monies available to SWIB.
- ◆ There is no need to establish defined contribution plan options for WRS participants because they already exist and the system IS NOT BROKEN!

## *What can you do?*

- ◆ Learn about the issues and remain informed.
- ◆ Reach out and share information with other WRS participants, both active and annuitant.
- ◆ Contact your legislative representatives and members of the Joint Finance Committee. Tell them "It's not broken and doesn't need to be fixed."
- ◆ Work on the recall effort and upcoming elections.

December, 2011

Dear Colleague:

I hope to see you on May 18, 2012 at the WEAC-Retired Annual Conference at the Sheraton Hotel in Madison. It's a great opportunity to attend a variety of exciting, informative sessions and socialize with members from across the state. There will be an exhibitor area, fundraising give-away baskets and silent auction for the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education.

The Sheraton Hotel room costs \$99.00 plus tax per night. Contact Sheraton Hotel directly for your reservation (608-251-2300). Currently, a block of 25 rooms has been reserved until April 13, 2012. Please book early and ask for the WEAC-Retired Group Rate.

Take advantage of the conference advance registration fee of only \$40. Complete the registration form below, detach it, and return with your check by March 16, 2012.

Sincerely,



Bob Henning, President

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**WEAC-Retired 2012 Annual Meeting/Conference  
REGISTRATION FORM**

Please print or type

Capacity is limited to 250 participants, and registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Spouses/significant others are most welcome (copy this form). The registration fee includes continental breakfast, buffet lunch and basic conference materials. For the cooking, jewelry making, and magic tricks workshops there is an additional \$5.00 materials fee per session. The advance registration fee is \$40.00 per person if postmarked by March 16, 2012. The registration fee for those postmarked after March 16 is \$50.00.

Late name, first name, middle initial:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Home mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, state, zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Area code/home phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

To assist our planning, please mark the breakout you wish to attend:

Session 1: A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D \_\_\_ E \_\_\_ Session 2: A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D \_\_\_ E \_\_\_

Session 3: A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D \_\_\_ E \_\_\_

Complete, detach and mail with your check (payable to WEAC-Retired) to:

WEAC-Retired Annual Meeting/Conference  
Attention: Beth Waschow  
2130 E. Norwood Drive  
Oak Creek, WI 53154

Help us save postage fee by providing us with your email for your conference confirmation. Don't forget to add the \$5.00 additional materials fee for each session marked with \*\*.