

Keeping in Touch



WEAC-Retired Annual Conference Highlights

Participants at the 2007 Annual Conference meeting (May 11, Appleton) rated it a huge success. Evaluation comments reflected appreciation for the wide variety of session topics.

Offerings included meat-and-potato topics such as protecting oneself from identity theft and what to look for in choosing a long term care policy. Hobby-oriented sessions on the subjects of patio gardening and fly fishing were popular as were those dealing with travel. Would-be travelers attended *Touring Wisconsin*, a presentation providing out-of-the-way destinations of interest in northern and western Wisconsin. Tom Kreif, the travel writer for *Keeping in Touch*, did two sessions demonstrating how travelers could save money online and with travel agents.

New this year were sessions concentrating on alternative medicine – including aromatherapy – and a local antiques appraiser presented his version of *Antiques Road Show*.

Mark your calendars for next year's conference. It will be held April 25th (a Friday) in Madison at the Sheraton Hotel. A block of rooms will be held for a while during the registration period beginning in March for those who would like to make a week-end of it and sample what Madison has to offer. Watch for more in the March 2008 issue of *Keeping in Touch*.



Top: Wisconsin ARA executive director Billy Feitlinger addresses the group.



Left: Participants browsed the exhibits between sessions.

NEA-Retired Annual Meeting – Summary Report *By Kay Krause and Florence Hyatt (Excerpt)*



Wisconsin's delegation (from left) Ginger Stuvetraa, Bob Coleman, Florence Hyatt, Chuck Howard, Carmen Periquet, Kay Krause, George Alafouzos, Bob Henning and Ken Flood.

Delegates were welcomed by Pennsylvania Retired President Regis Laughlin and NEA-Retired President, Barbara Matteson to the June 26 – 28 event held in Philadelphia.

Keynote speaker Steve Protulis, executive director of an elderly housing development corporation, emphasized the crisis in elderly housing and the need to promote, find funding and build affordable housing for the elderly. (Read more on page three.)

Many NEA speakers warmly thanked the delegates, and their colleagues at home, for having worked on the successful 2006 elections. They said our work made a big difference and look forward to working with us in 2008.

Elections were held for Resolutions Committee (Bob Henning was elected as second alternate), Advisory Committee, Vice President and Board of Directors.

Delegates attended workshops and participated in fund-raising activities for the Children's Fund for Public Education. In all, retirees contributed \$16,002 – a sum that well-surpassed last year's total.

NEA Distinguished Service Award – Wisconsin's Candidate and Nominees



Florence Hyatt

Florence Hyatt, the CRUE – Retired President and WEAC – Retired Secretary, was this year's WEAC-Retired nominee for the NEA-Retired Distinguished Service Award. Florence has

had an extensive history with her local, UniServ, WEAC and the NEA, both as an active and retired member.

As an Onalaska teacher, Florence held every office and served on each local committee at various times. She also was on the first negotiating team in Onalaska and continued bargaining for many years.

Florence represented her local on the CRUE Board and went on to hold every UniServ office (including the Presidency for 11 years,) in addition to working on all CRUE committees.

Florence served on the WEAC Board as both the representative and the alternate from CRUE. She was the representative on WEAC's 32nd Senate Legislative Committee and served as the Legislative Committee Chair.

She was elected an alternate to the NEA Board. Subsequently she was elected to two three-year terms as an NEA director. In addition to her Board work, Florence chaired the Officer Compensation Committee, attended Representative Assemblies from 1977-2001 and was the

NEA delegate to Education International in Thailand.

Florence hasn't limited her activities to just Association work. She was elected to the Onalaska Board of Education in 2002 and currently serves as the Treasurer. She serves on the Wisconsin School Board Association Resolutions Committee and has been a delegate to state and national school board conventions.

Among Florence's other achievements, she won the Herb Kohl Award for Exceptional Educators, served on the Governor's Education Commission and helped compile information for designating Onalaska Middle School as a "Blue Ribbon School," a national Department of Education award.



Jim Billmann

Excerpting the words of his nomination letter, Jim Billmann, another Distinguished Service Award nominee, has been a strong advocate for his community, his profession, and his

Association. He is considered an extremely "positive" person who has the vision to work within a committee and quietly lead its members toward the goals they seek.

Within the Association, Jim has held the position of Treasurer of KMUC for an unprecedented 20 years, half of them since retirement from teaching in 1997. Jim is also serving as the Treasurer of the KMUC Building Corporation as well as the Treasurer and Membership Secretary of KMUC-Retired.

Within the community Jim has been involved in many political campaigns of pro-education candidates on the state and local levels. He's been an active church member serving as Finance Board member, Communion assistant, usher, choir member, and Visitation Committee member.

Jim has also been a member of a community band in West Bend and has played in a German band from West Bend for the past 15 years, all on a volunteer basis.

Jim's image within the Association and public education is that of a very professional person who knows his materials, accepts his responsibilities, and fights hard for the Union and public education. In short, he is one of those individuals who entered the teaching profession many years ago and will only leave it when nature restricts him. He is truly a "Life-long Advocate of Public Education."



Lev De Back

Last year's WEAC-Retired nominee was Lev De Back of Council-10-Retired. Again excerpting the words of his nomination letter, the one word that codifies Lev De Back

is "longevity."

His longevity begins with his teaching. Lev taught for 39 years as a Middle School science teacher and coordinator with the Franklin School District. His initial teaching degree was from a normal school – the ancient way of becoming a teacher. The Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater came later. While teaching, Lev developed the 40-acre Environmental Center on the school grounds and then created a K-8 environmental program and started the Middle School Science Club to utilize the Center. He also designed a Science Fair Program - working for 30 years in cooperation with Marquette University. Lev received a commendation from the Franklin

School Board and the Superintendent for his efforts.

Regarding the Association, Lev was at the forefront serving the Franklin Teachers Association for three terms and serving on the bargaining committee for numerous years. When the 220 Voluntary Integration Program was enacted, Lev stepped forward as our UniServ (Council-10) representative. He also served Council-10 for two terms on the WEAC Board of Directors. In addition to his ever-reliable attendance, Lev always maintained a positive demeanor. Regardless of the situation, Lev kept his calm – his manner and his voice were always common denominators of a man in control.

As a retiree and continuing to reflect that air of stability and fairness, Lev's political achievements include being elected to the Muskego School Board for three terms and had to tread that perilous line of representation during the Muskego Teachers' strike. From working on fundraisers, distributing literature, and making phone calls, Lev worked tirelessly on the campaigns of State Representative Hough, State Senator Robson, Congressmen Barrett and Kleczka, and Senators Kohl

and Feingold. He served on the Board of Wisconsin Citizen Action and the Wisconsin Council of Senior Citizens as a WEAC representative. He has lobbied in the past and continues to do so for the issues that continue to confront education. Currently, Lev represents WEAC-Retired on the Board of the Alliance for Retired Americans.

The community has been the beneficiary of Lev's good will. Though not a political post as such, Lev served 3 years on the Muskego Police and Fire Commission. He functioned as an educator at Boerner Botanical Gardens – teaching K-6 science. He has been a member of the Franklin Environmental Commission and has served on the Food Pantry Committee at St. Martin of Tours Parish. As a Lions representative, he coordinated the Easter Egg Hunt and chaired the Santa Claus Breakfast. In 2003 he received the highest Lions award given – the Melvin Jones Award for Public Service.

Lev De Back – an unflappable character – continues to this day. Council 10-Retired chose him to be their first President and currently he's their President Emeritus.

Travel Tips



- **Credit Card Issues** – Over the last few years, the fees associated with using a credit card abroad or an ATM in a foreign country have, in some cases, tripled. A few years ago both Visa and MasterCard had only a 1% service charge. Today, some of the Chase credit cards collect \$3.00 plus 3% for each ATM withdrawal. In addition, most credit and debit cards issued by Bank of America, Chase, Citibank, and Wells Fargo charge 3% on transactions. According to Money Magazine, Capital One has no fees. Before you plan on using an ATM, credit, and/or debit card, find out what the real cost is going to be.
- **Rental Car Insurance** – When you're traveling, two concerns may arise when you rent a car.
 - ✈ First, there are the add-on dollars for insurance, which you probably should decline. Before you decline, however, you should find out whether either your credit card (the one you use to rent the car) or your own auto insurance covers rental cars. If you have coverage, why waste your money on insurance fees?
 - ✈ Second, before picking up your rental car at the airport find out about the special excise taxes for this convenience. Boston, Kansas City and Seattle will definitely hit you up for such taxes. Many neighborhood car rental agencies provide free shuttle service and the excise taxes are a lot lower. It pays to research this ahead of time.
- **Luggage Weight Allowance** – Most domestic airlines have a 50-pound weight limit on each bag and a 40-pound

weight limit on international flights. There are several international airlines that limit you to one checked bag. As I have mentioned before, you need to check directly with the airline for both the number of bags you can check along with the weight limit. If you think your luggage might be too heavy, pack a collapsible travel bag. In addition, pack all of your belongings in zip-lock bags. This makes for easy removal upon arrival and also is a must if you have to do immediate repacking to meet the weight limits.

- **Traveler Networks** – New on the web are sites that use profiles to create a network of travelers. Recommendations from other travelers sharing their travel secrets and hints can make for a more enjoyable vacation. The Wall Street Journal mentioned the following six sites:
 - ✈ tripmates.com
 - ✈ travel.yahoo.com/trip
 - ✈ igougo.com
 - ✈ gusto.com
 - ✈ realtravel.com
 - ✈ tripadvisor.com (from Expedia)

Nick Timiraos of The Wall Street Journal wrote: “*Now social networking is becoming one of the latest innovations in the online travel world, allowing people to correspond directly with locals or other travelers with similar tastes and interests to find the hidden gems....*”

— **Thomas Kreif**, WEAC-Fox Valley Retired Member and Traveler
—<http://my.athenet.net/~mesh/>

(Travel trips for this issue come from experience, Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel, and traveling friends.)

The Crisis in Elderly Housing...from the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting

Excerpt from the report of Kay Krause and Florence Hyatt



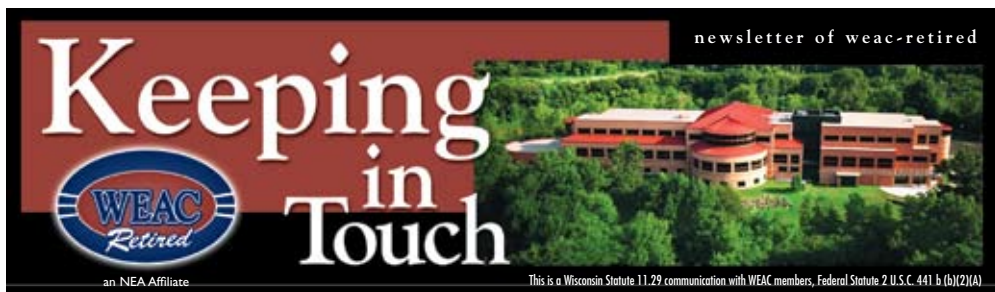
Steve Protulis, Executive Director/ Executive Vice President, Elderly Housing Development and Operations Corporation (EHDOC) was the keynote speaker. Protulis' emphasis is promoting, finding funding and building affordable housing for the elderly. There is a crisis

in senior housing – mostly for those seniors who want to stay in their own homes. However, there are seniors that need extra help. There is a need for “aging” homes for seniors. The crisis is 1) lack of caregivers – the need for more to be trained; 2) the

need for nurses in the US. We now import 44,000 nurses from the Philippines; 3) Florida attracts retirees (Nov. had 33% increase in population) causing state taxes to rise. The tax increase is driving the snowbirds back to their home states – causing their states to scramble for services.

Since 1999 no politician has expressed an interest in senior housing. In 2001 the Federal government budget was set for a minimum of 40,000 units to be built per year. As of 2007 only 3,000 units have been built... with only 550 square feet each. The average nursing home costs \$76,500 year. It would be much less costly to provide services in their homes.

Over 76 million “baby boomers” will begin to retire in 2011. There will be a need for 730,000 additional units of affordable senior housing by 2020. Elderly housing will continue to be a problem/ crisis in the future. As we age, we all need to be conscious of the needs and cost implications of elderly housing.



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WEAC-Retired Calendar of Events	
August 27	WEAC-Retired PR Committee meeting – WEAC office
28	WEAC-Retired Member Benefits Committee meeting – WEAC office
29	WEAC-Retired Budget Committee meeting – WEAC office
September 7	WEAC-Retired Board of Directors – WEAC office
October 11	WEAC-Retired Legislative Coalition Committee meeting – WEAC office
25-26	WEAC Convention – Milwaukee – Midwest Express Center

Chapter Events

The events listed to the right are open to anyone. If you would like to participate, call or email the contact person listed for each event.

August 15, Edelweiss Milwaukee Harbor Fiesta Cruise, 5:30 – 7:00 PM

For \$20 (advanced registration) per person, you may have all the margaritas and tacos you wish to consume...all the while enjoying the company of your colleagues on a cruise around Milwaukee's harbor. *Sponsored by Council-10-Retired*

Reservations & Information:
Call 414-276-SHIP (414-276-7447) by August 14th (\$25 at the dock @ 3rd & Highland)

October 8, 12th Annual WIARA Power Luncheon, 4 Points Sheraton, Milwaukee, 11:00 – 1:00 PM

The Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans, with which WEAC is affiliated, represents over 87,000 Wisconsin retirees. Its mission is fighting to strengthen Social Security, pension laws and Medicare and to enact health care reform. Congresswoman Gwen Moore will be the guest speaker at this annual fundraiser. The cost is \$75.

Reservations & Information:
Cher Kuss: 414-771-9511

October 26 - 28, Ostoff Resort, Fall Getaway, Check in at 3pm Friday

Come enjoy a first-class resort on a budget! \$350 per couple (\$200 single) provides you with two night's lodging, Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast and dinner and Sunday brunch in a lovely setting. *Sponsored by Triwauk-Retired*

Reservations & Information:
Carmen Periquet: cperiquet@rr.wi.com or 262-544-5440



Cyber Connections:

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WEAC-Retired	www.weac.org/Constit/Retired.htm
WEA Trust	http://www.weac.org/Constit/weainsure
NEA-Retired	http://www.nea.org
NEA Member Benefits	http://www.neamb.com
Social Security Administration	http://www.ssa.gov
Employee Trust Funds	www.ETF.WI.GOV