

BLUE

Bay Lakes United Educators

1136 North Military Ave.
Green Bay, WI 54303

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www.WEAC.org/BLUE

Volume I, Issue 8

April 28, 2011

Stronger Than Ever

By Dean DeBroux, BLUE President

After the November election, I wrote an article predicting many of the bad things that were going to happen due to the election of Scott Walker and a Republican legislature. Unfortunately, I was wrong. It turned out to be much worse than any of us could have imagined. I told you then that we were going to fight with all our collective might, and fight we have done. This has been an incredible two and a half months. Your support and willingness to act has been nothing less than historic and inspiring to us all.

Now, we must continue to fight. As the "Budget Repair Bill" (Act 10) makes its way through the courts, we have to continue to prepare for its eventual enactment. We will survive this, but we need you to take an active role in your union.

Act 10 is specifically designed to make it difficult for public sector unions to exist. One hurdle we have to get over will be recertification. In order for your local Association to continue, the bargaining unit members must vote once a year to choose the union to represent them. Because Act 10 is caught up in legal wrangling, the status of recertification has not yet been determined and it will not be BLUE's priority at this time.

Another hurdle we have to get over is membership. Act 10 makes it illegal for the school districts to collect dues from your paycheck. Membership doesn't change, only the way in which you pay dues will change. Therefore, we are beginning membership drives this spring in locals that do not have contract extensions and we are asking locals to send teams of people to our membership drive training sessions. (Those locals with contracts beyond June 30, 2011 will not be immediately impacted by Act 10's recertification or membership requirements.)

Think of certification as the skeleton of the organization and membership as the muscle. A skeleton with no muscle cannot move. But we are

many, and together we will provide the muscle to turn this state right side up. We will have the muscle to jump any hurdle the Governor puts in front of us, and we will be stronger than we were before. They will not break our union. We will continue to fight!



Organizing for Our Future!

Membership Drive Training

All local Associations **WHO DO NOT HAVE CONTRACT EXTENSIONS PAST JUNE 30, 2011** should send teams to ONE of the following meetings:

- **Monday, May 2**
5:30—8:00 pm
- **Tuesday, May 10**
5:30—8:00 pm
- **Saturday, May 14**
9 am—noon

Information about Wisconsin Act 10's requirements for union membership will be presented. Locals need volunteers to serve on committees for Membership and who will attend one of these meetings. Please contact your local President and RSVP by indicating the name of your local and the number of people attending to blue@weac.org or 1-800-472-5582. Food will be provided.



Have You Been Laid Off?

If you are a support staff or teaching staff employee and have received a partial (reduction in hours) or a full layoff notice from your school district, please attend this important informational meeting.

**Tuesday, May 3, 2011
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.**

Topics of Discussion:

- **Unemployment Insurance**
 - Level of Benefits
 - When and How to Apply
- **Health Insurance: COBRA benefits available to you**
- **Recall Rights**
 - Recall time period
 - Rights and Responsibilities
 - Part-time recall

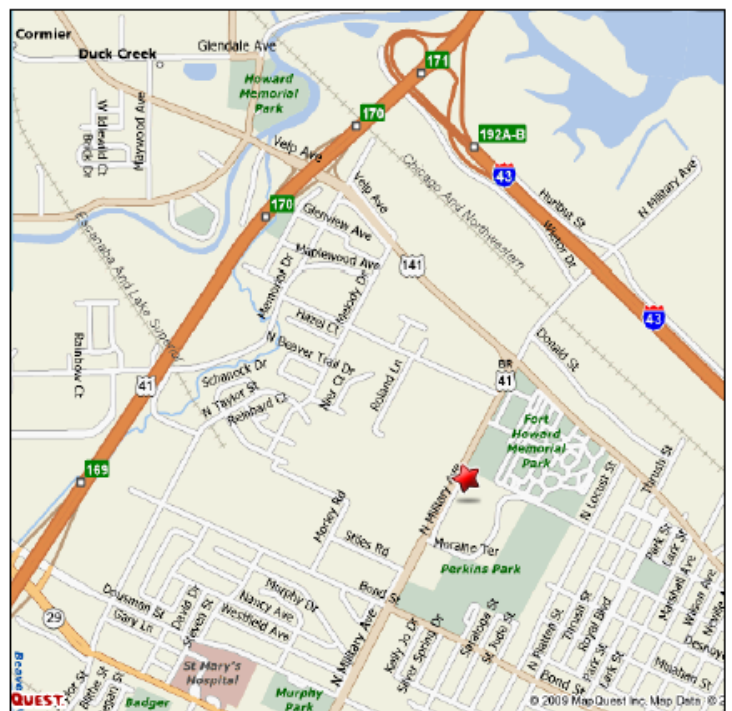
Please bring a copy of your union's contract with the District in order to get specific questions answered.

Location:

Bay Lakes United Educators Office
1136 N. Military Avenue,
Green Bay, WI 54303

RSVP:

Call to reserve a space at this meeting:
1-800-472-5582 or email blue@weac.org



Say No To Walker's Extreme State Budget

You raised your voice. During the legislative battle over our right to organize and bargain, we sent a clear message to legislators that the proposed budget repair bill was extreme and out of touch with Wisconsin values. You joined with your communities to rally for workers' rights. AND you sent more than 63,000 e-mail messages to your legislators.

Raise your voice again to counter Walker's extreme 2011-13 STATE BUDGET. We are in phase two of Governor Walker's attack on middle-class working families and all that Wisconsin values – excellent public schools, vital community services and a quality of life that can't be beat. What will the e-mail message count to policymakers be when Governor Walker proclaims that the public is behind him and his "tough" budget choices? Governor Walker and his allies are sure to motivate their base to demonstrate support for the state budget. Will we have the numbers to back up our claim that Governor Walker is out of touch and the people of Wisconsin have resoundingly rejected his state budget proposal as too extreme?

Take action today by going to www.weac.org/cyberlobby and clicking "Take Action" beneath "Governor Walker's budget is wrong for Wisconsin." (You can also click here to go right to the message). Then ask your neighbors, colleagues and friends to do the same. Thanks for all you do in support of children and public education!

This is a §11.29 communication with BLUE members.



The NEA Educators Employment Liability (EEL) Program



The NEA Educators Employment Liability (EEL) Program is a liability insurance program that is provided by NEA as a benefit of membership. All BLUE teacher and ESP members who work in school districts are covered; fair share dues payers are not covered.

What does the EEL Program Cover?

A. **Educator's Liability Benefit** - Payment of the legal costs of defending civil proceedings (other than proceedings concerning Civil Rights) brought against you in the course of your work as an educator, and up to \$1,000,000 in damages assessed against you as a result of such proceedings.

B. **Attorney Fees for the Defense of Criminal Proceedings** - Reimbursement for attorney fees and other legal costs up to \$35,000 if you are charged with violating a criminal statute in the course of your employment as an educator, and you are exonerated from these charges.

C. **Assault-Related Personal Property Benefit** - Payment of up to \$500 for damages to your personal property when caused by an assault upon you in the course of your employment. (Vehicle and school property are excluded).

Why do I need liability coverage?

In your work as an educator you are frequently exposed to situations that may give rise to legal actions and which can involve your personal liability. If a student or a student's parents file suit against you, the EEL Program will provide you with insurance protection for the vast majority of cases. The program also reimburses you for

damages to your personal property in assault-related incidents.

How do I obtain coverage?

If you are an NEA active, educational support, life, student, substitute or retired lifetime member who is employed by an educational unit, you are automatically covered by the EEL Program. You do not have to apply for this coverage.

Who pays the cost of the EEL Program?

The entire premium for the program is paid by the NEA.

Are some activities excluded from coverage?

Yes. Certain activities which NEA members perform are excluded. The following is a summary of some of the major activities that are excluded from coverage under the EEL Program. For further details, please consult your terms and conditions of coverage.

Excluded Activities:

- Rendering, teaching or supervising medical services, except the following are covered: (a) first-aid and regular nursing services rendered by a school nurse, or rendered by a certified health aide under the supervision of a school nurse, (b) physical, occupational or psychological therapy or treatment rendered by an appropriately licensed or certified practitioner, (c) the administration of oral prescription medicine to a student at the written request of a student's parents, (d) emergency first-aid services when a school nurse or other medically trained person is not readily available.
- Operating vehicles. (Note: driver training instructors are covered while riding as a passenger, and vocational

(Continued on page 6)

Why People Join the Union

Membership strengthens our collective voice.

- When you join your union, you add to our collective voice.
- Our union grows stronger with every additional member that joins. Your membership better positions WEAC to advocate for children, public schools, work place conditions, and restoring the voice of public school employees.
- Together we can do more than we can individually. When you and your colleagues join the association, policymakers know the education profession stands together on important educational issues. And that makes a big difference.
- WEAC is the largest organization in the state advocating for fair school funding. When you join WEAC, you help your union advocate for school funding reform – so you have the resources you need help students learn.
- Being a member includes being able to vote for and hold office in local, state and national offices.

Membership helps you become a better educator or support professional.

- Local, state, and national professional development opportunities such as Professional Development Plan training and licensure support, the WEAC Summer Academy, Winter Conference, on-line resources such as the Quality Educator Initiative (QEI) and numerous other opportunities for you to grow as a professional.
- Support initial and professional educators in their planning, completion, approval and verification of their Professional Development Plan (PDP).
- Statewide networks of educators and support professionals that share resources, discuss ways to tackle common concerns, and help each other develop professionally.
- Leadership development and advocacy training that helps members find, develop and exercise their voice.
- A widely recognized National Board Certification support program that supports educators as they seek to meet the rigorous criteria of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.
- Professional development opportunities for Education Support Professionals and teachers offered through the WEA Academy which offers course work, certification work and online video resources.
- On-site training programs for Educational Support Professionals by WEAC staff in legal/ethical issues in special education and the use of technology.
- Access to the NEA Academy that provides master's coursework through accredited universities at a substantially reduced price that compliments WEA Academy coursework.
- Representation at state level decision making bodies such as the Department of Public Instruction's Professional Standards Council, Next Generation Assessment Panel and Educator Effectiveness.
- Resources aimed at assisting new teachers to successfully navigate their first year in the classroom. Facilitating the professional growth of new teachers benefits everyone in the profession.

Continued on next page...

Why People Join the Union

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Membership affords you access to valuable benefits and discounts.

- Free legal services for advice and assistance with contractual and individual legal issues, such as those involving individual employment contracts and non-renewals, educator licensure, school board hearings, personnel and medical records, family and medical leave, disability benefits, unemployment insurance, workers compensation, discrimination, sexual harassment, wages, workplace safety and health, the Wisconsin Retirement System, academic freedom, special education including IEP processes, and public records and open meetings.
- **Free professional liability insurance for employment activities.**
- Access to cost-effective homeowners insurance, auto insurance, and Individual Retirement Accounts and other financial products offered through WEA Trust Member Benefits and NEA Member Benefits.
- Through the WEAC Savers Club, discounts on everything from hotel rooms to restaurants and retail stores.
- Discounted legal advice on non-work related personal matters, such as family law and trust and estates, through NEA's Attorney Referral Program.
- Free financial planning seminars throughout the state and no-cost individual financial planning appointments, all with a certified professional financial planner.
- Free publications such as WEAC In-Print, WEAC Beginning Teacher Handbook, and Great Schools – Understanding Your Child's Test Results.



(EEL PROGRAM continued from page 3)

education instructors are covered for their activities during school shop classes. In addition, coverage is provided for the loading and unloading of school buses.)

- Selling or distributing products, including food and beverages. (Note: Family and Consumer Education teachers are covered for their classroom and laboratory teaching activities and for the sale of products prepared in the classroom. Cafeteria workers are covered for their food preparation and distribution activities.)

Is the EEL Program limited to incidents that occur in buildings or on school grounds?

No. The program provides coverage for educational employment activities on and off school grounds including, school-sponsored athletic events, laboratory experiments, shop training, field trips in the U.S. and abroad, and after-school clubs. Educational employment activities are those duties that you perform pursuant to the express or implied terms of your employment for an educational unit.

Does the EEL Program cover criminal cases?

Yes. Attorney fees and court costs up to the maximum of \$35,000 will be reimbursed when the costs are incurred in the defense of a criminal proceeding arising out of your educational employment activities. In most cases, you will be reimbursed only if the proceeding is dismissed or you are exonerated. If, however, the proceeding arises out of an incident involving the administration of corporal punishment, the program will provide reimbursement, regardless of the outcome.

Does the EEL Program cover civil rights cases?

Yes. Defense, settlements or judgments and court costs up to a maximum of \$300,000 will be provided when incurred in the defense of an action arising out of your educational employment activities and alleging a violation of another person's civil rights.

Is the EEL Program "excess" to other insurance coverage which might be available to me?

Yes. "Excess" is a general insurance term that means insurance benefits become available to you only when other sources of insurance are exhausted. For example, if your school district provides professional liability coverage for you in some of the same areas as does the EEL Program, the EEL Program would not provide benefits until the school district's coverage ran out.

How do I make a claim for benefits?

If you are involved in any situation which you believe is covered by the EEL Program, notify the BLUE office (1-800-472-5582) or the WEAC Legal Division (1-800-362-8034).

Be Your Own \$uper Hero This Summer!

Use the power of knowledge to help you take control of your financial future. Whether you are just getting started or looking to find out how and when you can retire, attending one or both of these **free financial seminars** will empower you to be your own \$uper Hero.

Retirement Planning 101

For those considering retirement, this seminar will provide members with a general understanding of the three main sources of retirement income—Wisconsin Retirement System, Social Security, and personal savings. It will also help you understand the most common roadblocks that prevent a secure retirement and will help you understand the different retirement planning solutions available. This seminar is appropriate for those within 10 years of retirement.

Investing 101

Learning the basics of investing is the first step to building an investment strategy. Many never get past this first step because they don't have the time or are afraid it's too complicated. If this describes you, this is your chance. Whether you are just starting out or have been investing and want to know more, this one-hour seminar will be a good investment of your time.

When: **July 26, 2011**

Time: **Retirement Planning 101 at 10 a.m.
Investing 101 at 1 p.m.**

Where: **Bay Lakes United Educators, 1136 North
Military Avenue, Green Bay**

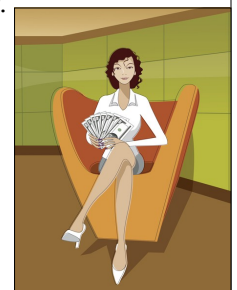
Register at www.weabenefits.com/superhero

Understand WRS 101 — Your Pension Plan

Do you completely understand your state pension? If not, this is a presentation you can't miss! WEA Trust Member Benefits is offering a FREE presentation to help you learn about this important benefit.

You will learn how to:

- Interpret your pension statement.
- Calculate your WRS benefit.
- Choose the right annuity option.
- Purchase forfeited service.
- Determine whether you will have a retirement income gap.



Wednesday, May 11, 5:00—6:30 p.m.

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, Lecture Hall, 2740 West Mason Street, Green Bay

To register, click here: <http://wrs0511gb.eventbrite.com/>

Or call Kristina Schiller at 1-800-279-4030, Ext. 1111

Stay Strong—Stay United

- ♦ First, and foremost, is the ability to recapture our collective bargaining rights in full. This will only happen with a strong and united effort through collective action. Your union is your vehicle to be able to make electoral changes, influence policy makers and to continue to tell the truth to the public about the work that public employees do. THIS IS THE MOST CRITICAL TIME TO BE INVOLVED! EVERY MEMBER MAKES US STRONGER!
- ♦ Related to the first notion is that the union provides individuals with a voice. A voice in the workplace through representation on issues, bargaining on wages, lobbying on funding for state agencies, lobbying on laws that affect the workplace, and a voice in the public for state employee concerns. It is only when individuals come together that their voices are heard. Your livelihood, professionalism and credibility will be defended by your union against the attacks by the current Walker administration.
- ♦ The union will still negotiate on wages up to the CPI. Your wages have been abused long enough. You should be making sure that you will be able to realize wage increases through the negotiations conducted by BLUE on your behalf.
- ♦ In these changing times the union may be the only safety net and check on the authority of management that remains for workers. This is especially true as it relates to enforcement of statute, civil service rules, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Fair Labor Standards Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and the First and Fourteenth Amendment to the US Constitution. Workers still have many rights that are abused with or without most of the collective bargaining rules we have been used to following.

RIGHTS ADVOCACY

- ♦ Advice, training and representation in employment issues
- ♦ Empowerment through knowledge of rights
- ♦ Legal enforcement of employee rights
- ♦ Professional staff available for representation, advice and assistance
- ♦ Advocacy with grievances and unfair labor practice claims

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

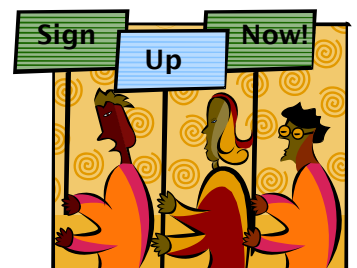
- ♦ Advice, consultation and representation by WEAC attorneys for:
 - ♦ Employment dismissals
 - ♦ Criminal matters related to employment
 - ♦ Civil and Human rights litigation
 - ♦ Unemployment hearings
- ♦ \$1,000,000 Professional Liability Insurance policy included in membership
- ♦ Attorney Referral Program-Two free 30 minute consultations annually

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

- ♦ Promoting and protecting public employee issues in the political arena
 - ♦ Funding
 - ♦ Legislation to restore collective bargaining rights and enforce contracts
 - ♦ Fighting legislation designed to weaken public sector services and promote privatization
 - ♦ Recommending and electing state and local public employee candidates

FINANCIAL BENEFITS

- ♦ Financial services
 - ♦ Credit cards
 - ♦ Money market accounts and CDs
 - ♦ Mortgages
 - ♦ Personal loans and lines of credit
 - ♦ Statewide financial planning services and seminars
- ♦ Insurance services
 - ♦ Exclusive Auto and Homeowners insurance
 - ♦ Group term life insurance
 - ♦ Complimentary life insurance (NEA Dues Tab)
- ♦ Tax benefits
 - ♦ Discount on H&R Block tax preparation
 - ♦ All dues are tax deductible
- ♦ Discounts
 - ♦ NEA Magazine service
 - ♦ Car rentals
 - ♦ Vacation services
 - ♦ Costco discounts
 - ♦ NEA Click and Save- savings on brand name merchandise from hundreds of top retailers, online stores, and local merchants.
- ♦ WEAC Savers' Club





THANK
YOU!

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Go PAC Go!

\$14 for the Fabulous 14

Dear BLUE PAC members,
In an effort to honor the 14 state Senators who had the courage to leave the state in order to protect the democratic process and

the rights of working people, we are asking BLUE members for a voluntary PAC contribution of \$14. This money will go to elect and protect pro public education candidates. As you well know, elections matter. And in elections, money matters, so we need to raise money to fight the millions of dollars that the corporate giants will pour into the coming elections. Every dollar will make a difference. Help us make a difference and give \$14 for the Fab 14.

To volunteer for this effort, mail personal checks made out to BLUEPAC to the BLUE office at 1136 N. Military Ave., Green Bay, WI 54303. Unfortunately, due to legal restrictions, the BLUE PAC cannot accept more than \$14 per member (and spouses and friends who would like to give must donate to a different organization).

Thank You,
Dean DeBroux
PAC Committee Chair

Visit Us on the Web

www.weac.org/blue

- [Calendar](#)—get all the latest updates on meeting dates and cancellations.
- [Facebook](#) (be our friend!)
- [Local Associations in the BLUE UniServ](#) (includes contact information for local leaders)
 - [Members Only](#)
(find local contracts and member benefits)

HYPERLINK! In case you were wondering, if you are looking at this newsletter in an electronic format online, all the email addresses, Internet URLs, and underlined references are hyperlinked. Just hit CTRL + ENTER and you will be directed to a web page link.

This is a \$11.29 communication with
BLUE members.

Wisconsin Working Families Spring Picnic

Bay Beach

Amusement Park

Pavilion and Shelter #6

Saturday

May 21, 2011

2:00—7:00 pm

Kids entertainment 2:00—4:00 pm

♦Clowns, face painting, balloons

Music 4:00—7:00 pm

♦Pat and Amy

Food 4:00—6:00 pm

♦Burgers, brats, hotdogs, beans,
coleslaw, dessert

Silent Auction 6:00 pm

Invited Speakers 5:00—5:30 pm

♦Senator Dave Hansen, Senator Jon
Erpenbach, Russ Feingold

Tickets: Adults \$15

♦kids under 12 free

Admission Tickets available in
advance only at this location:

♦Brown County Democratic Party
Office, 1061 W. Mason St.

Deadline for ticket purchase:
May 13, 2011

All proceeds go to the Brown County Democratic Party.
This is a 11.29 communication with WEAC members.

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UniServ Activity Calendar

Fri.—Sun. April 28-30	—	WEAC RA	Madison
Mon., May 2	5:30— 8:00 pm	Membership Drive Training	BLUE office
Tues., May 3	5:30— 7:30 pm	Layoff Workshop	BLUE office
Saturday, May 7	8 am— 12:30 pm	PDP Workshops: Writing, Goal Approval, Plan Verification	BLUE office
Tues., May 10	5:30— 8:00 pm	Membership Drive Training	BLUE office
Wed., May 11	5:00— 6:30 pm	Understand WRS 101	NWTC Lecture Hall
Wed., May 11	6:00—8 pm	BLUE Board Meeting	BLUE office
Saturday, May 14	9:00 am— noon	Membership Drive Training	BLUE office
Mon., May 16	6:30— 8:30 pm	Door/Kewaunee CBC	Nightingale, Sturgeon Bay
Wed., May 18	5:30—8 pm	BLUE Representative Assembly	Riverside Ballroom, Green Bay

Please check the website and Facebook for all the most recent additions and deletions!