

Council #10



CUDAHY • FRANKLIN • GREENDALE • GREENFIELD • OAK CREEK • ST. FRANCIS • SOUTH MILWAUKEE

Spring Elections: Why Should We Care?

Shortly after the completion of a seemingly endless presidential election campaign, you may feel like you need a break from politics. But it would be a big mistake to overlook some important elections coming up in the spring of 2009. Much is at stake for our schools and our jobs in these elections.

Wisconsin Supreme Court: Wisconsin's Supreme Court makes critical decisions regarding our schools and work on a regular basis. In the last ten years alone the following matters have come before the court:

- The constitutionality of Wisconsin's school aid formula
- The union's right to bargain and maintain contractual benefits like prep time
- Public employee privacy rights

More recently, lower courts have begun overturning grievance arbitration decisions which are fundamental to enforcing our contracts. If the Wisconsin Supreme Court upholds recent lower court decisions on this issue, the value of our union contracts will be greatly diminished.

In the last two Wisconsin Supreme Court elections, candidates who are likely to be hostile to the interests of public school employees have won. Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce (WMC), the corporate lobby that routinely seeks to block corporate accountability measures and undermine funding for public services like schools, is projected to spend up to \$6 million on the upcoming election.

Department of Public Instruction (DPI): Elizabeth Burmaster, the two-term Superintendent of the DPI is not seeking reelection. Who succeeds her matters a lot for our schools. Over the years, Burmaster maintained DPI as a clean and honest administration overseeing critical areas like teacher licensing and the school funding formula. DPI has been fair in addressing issues we have brought to them and has been a reliable source of important information.

If the past is any guide, groups that support school privatization and disdain school employee unions will likely run a candidate. DPI will become much less objective and much less dedicated to public schools if such a candidacy succeeds.

We can make the difference: In most spring elections fewer than 30 percent of eligible voters actually get out to vote. With tens of thousands of members in Wisconsin, just getting all our members out to vote can easily make the difference in electing public education friendly candidates in these elections.

Attention: All Building Representatives

Local leaders and building representatives alike have expressed the need for more clarity on what the role of a building representative is and better information and support for building representatives to do their jobs. Therefore our Leadership Council has scheduled an all Council #10 Building Representative meeting and training for **Tuesday, January 13, at 4:30pm**, at Carl's Catering and Banquet (5110 Loomis Rd., Greendale). Most local leaders are replacing their regular January building representative meeting with this meeting/training. For more information please contact your local president.

13805 West Burleigh Road
Brookfield, Wisconsin
53005-3058
phone: (262) 789-6000
fax: (262) 789-6010

OFFICERS

Nancy Koeckenberg
Chairperson/WEAC Board
Representative
Beth Waschow Interim
Alt. Chairperson/Alt. WEAC
Board Representative

STAFF

Val Gabriel
Executive Director
Ted Kraig
Executive Director
Sharleen "Shorty" Ott
Staff Assistant

Council #10 Website
www.weac.org/council10

MAKE CONNECTIONS

Council #10 Building
Representative Training,
Tuesday, January 13, 4:30pm,
Carl's Catering, 5110 Loomis
Rd., Greendale

WEAC Winter Conference
February 27 – March 1, 2009
Hilton Milwaukee

Great
Schools



weac.org

Active Members: Save the Date!

Many members recognize the direct effect politics and legislation have on our schools and on our work. In May and July, dozens of Council #10 members from diverse locals attended meetings to assess what problems we think are worth acting on and what we believe Council #10 members would do about them.

With the recent successes in the November election, we now have an unparalleled opportunity to make progress on issues like school funding, health care, and bargaining rights. On **Wednesday, January 21, at 4:30pm**, we are again asking members to join us at the **Carleton Grange Pub** in St. Francis, in order to help develop an action plan for 2009. You don't have to have attended one of the earlier meetings to come to this one. If you think our union's nearly one-hundred thousand members have an important role to play in bringing about better public policy for our schools and all working people, please join us to be part of the solution. If you can join us...please RSVP to Shorty Ott at otts@weac.org.

Check out Consumer Report's Best Buy Drugs Website

You've probably seen the TV commercials – “Gotta go right now” – advertising the latest drugs to treat overactive bladder. But you may not know that none of the five medications to treat the condition are any more effective than the others. And there are major price differences between them.

You can find out about these and other prescribed drugs for fifteen common treatment categories on Consumer Reports' Best Buy Drugs website at www.CRBestBuyDrugs.org. The National Education Association is affiliated with this national effort to cut healthcare costs and provide consumers with sound information on the cost and effectiveness of prescription drugs.

Preparing for Upcoming Negotiations

The current economic crisis is generating budget difficulties that will affect all public services and employees. Upcoming negotiations for 2009-2011 agreements are likely to be very challenging. In bargaining, our ability to act with other locals around the region and state in an intelligent and coordinated fashion has become especially critical.

Traditionally, statewide bargaining goals generated by WEAC have been laudable, but not entirely useful. Therefore, WEAC's new collective bargaining leadership is revamping the process for developing bargaining goals. This year, goals will be generated by dozens of meetings with UniServ bargaining councils around the state. The aim of the process is to develop goals that matter and the plan, resources and supports necessary to achieve them. Council #10's “Cadre” of chief negotiators is meeting with WEAC leaders on December 11 for this purpose.

This Year's Winter Conference in Milwaukee

This year's statewide Winter Conference takes place at the Wyndham Milwaukee Airport Hotel and Convention Center (most recently known as the Four Points Sheraton) from February 27 to March 1. As this location is right in the middle of Council #10 territory, it provides a great opportunity for our members to attend. This year's conference theme is “Moving to Action,” and dozens of learning opportunities are available. To register or get more information visit the Members' Only page of the WEAC website at www.weac.org.

Member Ads

Door County Cabin for Rent. Accommodates up to 12 people. Cabin is near Baileys Harbor in a rural, woodsy setting. Available year-round. Electric heat, many amenities, fireplace, open concept living, dining, kitchenette, sleeping loft with 4 beds, large deck with furniture, gas grill. Call (414) 427-8420 or (920) 839-2715 for additional information and educator discounts.