

March 2007



**Kettle Moraine
UniServ Council**

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Volume 24 No. 6

March 19
Legislative Dinner
5:30 p.m.
Millhome Supper Club

March 20
Bob Moeller Seminar
6:30—9:00 p.m.
KMUC Office

April 6
Holiday
Office Closed

April 11
CBC/Presidents Meeting
6:00 p.m.
KMUC Office

April 18
**Pre-RA Meeting
Exec. Com. Meeting**
4:30 p.m.
KMUC Office

April 23
KMUC Board Meeting
6:00 p.m.
KMUC Office

May 8
KMUC Rep. Assembly
5:30
Al & Al's Steinhaus
1502 S. 12th Street
Sheboygan

KMUC is affiliated with WEAC
and NEA



A Legislative Cure for the Health-Care Cost Blues?

Health care costs are squeezing family budgets. As medical costs continue to rise, fewer employers offer health care insurance, and employees are left to explore the individual insurance market and its unaffordable options. Families with employer coverage face rising deductibles and increased cost-sharing. Health care often dominates collective bargaining negotiations, with our members sacrificing salary increases or accepting pay cuts just to maintain benefits.

With rising costs putting health care out of reach for many, the public is clamoring for a solution to the health care costs crisis. In the November 2006 election, Wisconsin voters in 11 communities overwhelmingly approved a non-binding health care referendum initiative calling for the Wisconsin Legislature to develop a plan to reduce health care costs and guarantee access to universal, affordable health care coverage for all Wisconsin residents. Will the Legislature heed the call?

Calling the skyrocketing cost of health care "the biggest threat to continued economic development and job creation," Senate Majority Leader Judy Robson (D-Beloit) has made increasing health care affordability and accessibility a top priority. The Senate Health and Human Services Committee will be traveling to Green Bay on March 9 and Eau Claire on March 22 to hold public hearings on five health care reform plans:

Wisconsin Health Plan—Requires companies to pay 3 percent to 12 percent of wages and employees to pay 2 percent into a purchasing pool. Wisconsin residents, using health savings accounts, would select from among three tiers of health plans offered by various insurers.

Wisconsin Health Care Partnership Plan—Charges employers about \$340 per month per worker for a uniform plan that would cover all medically necessary care and would be developed by a Labor-Management Commission. Employees would also help fund the system with deductibles and co-payments. Unions would still be able to bargain for additional benefits.

Senate Bill 51 (Sen. Miller/Rep. Benedict) - Proposes a single-payer, state-run plan that would tax employers and individuals for health care.

BadgerCare Plus—Offers every Wisconsin family, regardless of income, the chance to buy coverage for their kids, starting at about \$10 per month. Expands eligibility to childless individuals making up to \$20,000 a year and pregnant mothers making up to \$30,000 per year. These provisions are included in Governor Doyle's 2007-09 state budget proposal.

Smart Medicine—Promotes consumer-driven health care. Proposes to increase access to health care by providing a tax deduction for premium payments and eliminating the tax on Health Savings Accounts contributions.

Assembly Speaker Mike Huesch (R-West Salem) says the Republican-controlled Assembly is also interested in health care reform; however, he envisions a very different approach. Rep. Huesch rejects government-run health care initiatives and taxes on employers to fund reform. For him, the solution to the health care dilemma lies in consumer-based free market competition and health savings accounts.

Will the two houses of the Legislature and Governor Doyle be able to coalesce around a health care reform play?

Stay tuned.

**Legislative Dinner
March 19, 2007**

KMUC's Legislative Dinner will be held at Millhome Supper Club starting at 5:30. If you haven't contacted your president about attending please do so as soon as possible.



**Managing Your Financial Life
"Getting Ahead and Staying Ahead"**
Presented by Bob Moeller, WEAC Member
Benefits Specialist
March 20 • 6:30—9:00 p.m.
KMUC Office



All members are invited to this seminar including financial planning, life insurance issues, investments, retirement and estate planning. A flyer was mailed to all members late February.

**Spring Elections
April 3, 2007**

Important State Supreme Court and School Board elections as well as referendums may be on your ballot.

**ESP
Stress Management Training
April 30, 2007
5:30—8:00
KMUC Office**

This training is available to all ESP Members. A flyer is available through your local president. The cost of this training is \$10.00 and dinner is included. You may register on-line at www.weac.org/kmuc. If you have any questions, please contact Sarah at 920-565-2913 or berths@weac.org.

Workers Independent News

KMUC has made a contribution to Workers Independent News. WIN is the only independently-produced daily newscast of issues relevant to working Americans and organized labor on the radio today. Our contribution will be used to support WIN's Wisconsin Radio Project. WIN believes that our democracy is best served when working people have access to news and information that focuses on *their* needs and speaks to *their* concerns.

As part of this contribution, KMUC's website hosts a link to this broadcast which you can access at any time. It is located on the home page at www.weac.org/kmuc. Visitors will be able to hear WIN headline newscasts, an economic report and the most recent feature story.

**That's All For Now
Wobbly Legs in the Third**

A new article has been posted at the website. Go to www.weac.org/kmuc.