

**14-A Uniserv Newsletter**  
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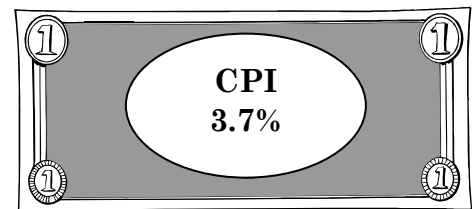
# Eastsider

Chuck Herring, UniServ Director  
Harriet Poch, UniServ Field Assistant

December 3, 2007

## WHERE'S CHUCK?

- Dec. 4 - 14A MEA Retired Christmas Party & Silent Auction -Alpena County Library  
14A Coordinating Council - MEA Office  
5-6 - **Northern Zone Bargaining Planning Meeting (Petoskey) – Alpena MEA Office Closed**  
7 - Chuck on leave  
10 - NMEA Staff Meeting - Traverse City  
11-14 - Chuck on leave – Second Week of Deer Camp  
17 - Alpena EA Ratification meeting - AHS  
18 - Lansing  
20 - Mentor Meeting w/Pat Bolen -Grayling  
24-31 - **Christmas Break – MEA Offices closed**  
Jan. 1 - **Christmas Break – MEA Offices closed**  
7-8 - TEF presentation - Sault Ste. Marie  
14-18 - Chuck Gone - NEA Training - New Mexico  
21 - **Martin Luther King Day – MEA Offices closed**  
23 - Statewide Staff Agenda Committee Meeting - Lansing  
25 - Lansing  
29-30 - Pre-Retirement Workshop - Location TBA  
Feb. 1 - Presidents'/CC Delegates' & Legislator Workshop  
4 - Mentoring Meeting – Detroit  
5 - School Law & Collective Bargaining Training – Detroit  
8 - Statewide Staff Meeting – Detroit  
7-9 - Bargaining/Political Action/PR Conference – Detroit  
12 - Coordinating Council Meeting – MEA Office



## RIGHT TO WORK?

From the amount of snow I shoveled yesterday—this morning—it's officially winter. With the snow comes the holidays, then the winter doldrums.

To liven up the doldrums, the right wing of today's society has decided it is time for the State of Michigan to become a "Right to Work" state. This sounds innocent enough. After all everyone should have the right to work—right? Well, this goes a little further than a simple right to work. It is designed to eliminate unions. It does it very simply...no one has to belong to a union to work. That is union membership is optional. One gets all the bene's but need not pay union dues. Sounds great. But here is the dirty little secret about this legislation. The Public Employees Relations Act (PERA) was passed in the early 60's. This Act allows unions to bargain and represent workers collectively. In exchange for having the sole right to bargain for its members, it must also provide representation (duty of fair representation). This duty of fair representation mandates the union to provide all members and fee payers full and complete representation on issues surrounding their work (wages, hours and working conditions). The right to work law would allow member(s) to work in or at a union location without mandated

membership. However, the union is still obligated to represent this person under law. What happens is the union must provide all services without the dollars coming in to provide same. Next thing one knows the union goes away (broke), the members have only themselves to advocate, wages decline, hours increase, and working conditions deteriorate.

Right to work is nothing more than union busting in its most glorious form.

We will be voting in November on this issue—remember right to work IS WRONG.

### NEW IRS MILEAGE RATES:

The IRS has announced that the standard business mileage rate beginning January 1, 2008 will be 50.5 cents per mile, up from the 48.5 cents per mile rate in effect during 2007.



### Dates to remember:

The Bargaining/Political Action/PR Conference is scheduled for February 7-9, 2008, at Cobo Center in Detroit. All units who will be bargaining in 2008 should have someone in attendance.

The Northern Zone will be bringing training to us, i.e., U.P., Muskegon area, and Northern Lower Peninsula on Northern Zone Bargaining Strategy. Again, all units bargaining this year or next should be watching for the announcements.

### Did you know...

Bargaining this year is Alcona EA, Alpena ESP I (bus drivers), Atlanta EA, Hillman EA, and Rogers City EA. All will be settling for COLA (3.7%) with fully paid health, dental, vision, LTD, and life insurance. Not to mention unlimited association days, increased personal days, and life insurance through retirement. Those units not getting all this will be unsettled until the respective boards see the light.

**Open houses don't help sell houses.** They benefit the real estate agents—who meet people in the market for homes—but they are of almost no value to the seller. Fewer than 1% of homes sell because of an open house. Colleen Pearsall, owner, 4% Properties, Fort Myers, Florida.



**If you are selling your home on your own,** list the home on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS). In most markets, you can get your house listed for \$200 to \$500 for six to 12 months. In a search engine such as Google, type “flat fee MLS” and your zip code to find an agent willing to post an unrepresented listed. *Price it right.* Ask three real estate agents to provide a free comparative price analysis, and use a search engine to find an on-line appraisal service. *SmartMoney*, 1755 Broadway, New York City, 10019. 12 issues. \$24/yr.

This is for the Alpena EA bargaining team who questioned my English grammar knowledge: “**It’s vs. its.** Use the apostrophe only if the intended meaning is “it is.” *Its*—without an apostrophe—is the possessive form of “it.” Don K. Ferguson is a newspaper columnist in Knoxville, Tennessee, and a former newspaper editor and report. He is author of *Grammar Gremlins* (Glenbridge).

**BEST WISHES FOR A SAFE, HAPPY AND  
RELAXING CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY**

**CHUCK & HARRIET**