

14-A Uniserv Newsletter
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Eastsider

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April 8, 2008

WHERE'S CHUCK?

- Apr. 8 - 14A COPAC Meeting (MEA Office)
- 9 - Region 14 Council Meeting (BJ's – Gaylord)
- 10 - **“Get out of Debt Celebration” (Brush Creek Mill – Hillman)**
- 11 - Northern Zone Staff Meeting (Marquette)
- 14 - Hillman EA Bargaining (Hillman)
- 14-16 - Harriet at Field Assistant Training (Kalamazoo)
- 15 - Alcona EA Bargaining (Lincoln)
- 16 - Alcona EA Bargaining (Lincoln)
- 17 - NMEA (BJ's – Gaylord)
- 18 - Chuck in Lansing
- 21 - Alcona EA Bargaining (Lincoln)
- 23 - Dinner meeting with COPAC Chair re Agenda (Lewiston)
- 25-30 - Chuck on leave
- May 1-2 - Chuck on leave
- 5 - Alcona EA Bargaining (Lincoln)
- 6 - 14A COPAC Meeting (location to be announced)



OCTOBER DEBACLE:

In the middle of the night, our legislators used MESSA as a front to mess with our retirement. The following is the result:

In early October, 2007, the state legislature made changes to retirement laws affecting the public school employee retirement system, as a part of the budget deal.

Effective October 1, 2007, to reestablish membership after a period of deferment, a public school employee must earn at least one-tenth (0.10) of a year of service in each of the five years immediately preceding his or her retirement effective date, or must earn one-half (0.50) a year of service in the two fiscal years immediately preceding his or her retirement effective date.



To qualify for a full insurance premium subsidy, public school employees hired on or after July 1, 2008, must earn at least 25 years of service. If the employee earns less than 25 years, a graded insurance premium subsidy applies. The subsidy is 30% for the first ten (10) years, and four (4%) percent for each additional year of service beyond 10 years. The maximum subsidy is 90%.

Beginning July 1, 2008, if a member purchases service credit that results in the member qualifying for a pension earlier than they could have without the purchase of service credit, the insurance premium subsidy does not begin until they would have been eligible for retirement without the purchase of the service credit. The insurance premium subsidy begins when the length of the purchased time needed to qualify has passed, or they reach age 60 – whichever comes first. Service credit purchased on or before June 30, 2008, will not affect the date the insurance subsidy begins. Note that current employees must commence purchasing their service credit prior to June 30, 2008 in order to avoid the limitations imposed by this new law. If a member enters into a TDP (Tax Deferred Payment) contract that carries the payment plan beyond June 30, 2008, the member will NOT be subject to the new rules.

Employees hired after July 1, 2008 will contribute 6.4% (current employees pay 4.3%) of their wages that exceed \$15,000. The existing graded rate still applies to wages that do not exceed \$15,000 for employees hired before July 1, 2008. This added contribution will only serve to lessen the employer's obligations to fund the pension plan.



Even though old man winter is a little slow leaving the room, spring is in the air...days are getting longer, sun seems warmer, and the end of the year is in sight. With May comes the RA (Representative Assembly) and elections of our state officers. It is a sad state of affairs when we have only one person running for the presidency and vice-presidency. What is going on? When I was in leadership in Sault Ste. Marie, it was not uncommon to have three or four candidates running for the major seats. These are highly paid positions – \$117,000-\$155,000 for a first step position. I know there are people walking through the halls of our schools capable of running the MEA. We need an infusion of new blood, new ideas, new directions, and new vigor. We are presently a sleeping bear, in need of awakening and direction—be a part of change or live with the results.

IT'S BEEN A LONG WINTER



THINK WARM THOUGHTS!