

**14-A Uniserv Newsletter**  
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# Eastsider

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February 9, 2010

## Where's Chuck?

- Feb. 8 - Alpena EA Bargaining
- 9 - 14A Coordinating Council (MEA Office)
- 10 - Region 14 Council (BJ's – Gaylord)
- 11 - Alpena EA Mediation  
Alpena EA General Membership Meeting  
MESSA Tune-Up (Alpena)
- 15 - Alcona EA Pre-bargaining meeting (Lincoln)
- 16 - Alcona EA General Membership meeting (Lincoln)
- 18 - NMEA (BJ's – Gaylord)
- 19 - Lansing
- 20 - Local Affiliates Meeting (Lansing)
- 24 - Workforce Development Board meeting (BJ's – Gaylord)  
Rogers City EA General Membership meeting (Rogers City)
- 25 - **“When the Vigoro Hits the Mixmaster” Workshop (MEA Office)**
- Mar.2-3 - Pre-retirement Workshops (Soo MEA office)
- 5 - Alpena EA Fact-Finding
- 6 - NMEA Annual Meeting & Training (Treetops – Gaylord)
- 9 - 14A Coordinating Council meeting (MEA office)



## State of Our Plight!

Where does one begin? Mike Bishop, Republican Senate Whip, stated on a Monday we should be reducing our wages and paying 25% of our insurance premiums. Then, the following Monday, our Democratic Governor suggests negative modifications to our pensions and changing the insurance from a defined benefit (guaranteeing health, vision and dental) to a defined contribution (guaranteeing the state will only pay so much for the insurance package—the rest to be picked up by us).

Why you ask? Because neither the above nor the parties they represent are made up of the fabric necessary to bring this State into the 21<sup>st</sup> century economically. Both are afraid to raise, modify, or create new and more appropriate taxes for our economy and our tax base. Both are playing a spineless game of taking away from the populace rather than bringing the populace up in status: economically and emotionally.

With leadership this state will prosper. With lack of leadership we will not prosper. It will take ten years to recover for every year our present “leaders” dilly dally about the State’s economy. The problem can be fixed (see the last *Eastsider*) but the longer we wait and play games, the longer it takes for an upturn. Our response to these shenanigans is abysmal. If we don’t demand responsible behavior on the part of our elected leaders, we get what we are now experiencing.

Demand better—

Sen. Tony Stamas – 36 <sup>th</sup> (R)	866-305-2136	<a href="mailto:senstamas@senate.michigan.gov">senstamas@senate.michigan.gov</a>
Sen. Jason Allen – 37 <sup>th</sup> (R)	866-525-5637	<a href="mailto:senjallen@senate.michigan.gov">senjallen@senate.michigan.gov</a>
Rep. Kevin Elsenheimer – 105 <sup>th</sup> (R)	877-536-4105	<a href="mailto:kevinelsenheimer@house.mi.gov">kevinelsenheimer@house.mi.gov</a>
Rep. Andy Neumann – 106 <sup>th</sup> (D)	877-737-4106	<a href="mailto:andyneumann@house.mi.gov">andyneumann@house.mi.gov</a>

Just tell them to fix the problem once and for all!!!!

### Bargaining RT3

Several bargaining leaders suggested getting together on a Saturday and coming up with language to address the RT3 “stuff”. So, with their help we will have 14A “prototype” language for those issues before you hit the bargaining table.

### Knowledge Has Value

How many times have we read, heard, and said “Race to the Top” in the past few months? With a possible \$400 million coming to Michigan should the state be declared a “winner” in this so-called race. Being knowledgeable about some of the facts related to the competition has value.

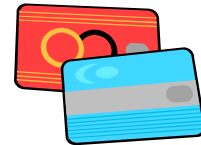
Did you know that according to *Education Week*...

- 20% of the states—from all over the country—decided not to compete in this first round of up to \$4 billion in RT3 grants.
- In their applications, Florida, Indiana, Louisiana, and Tennessee say they will base at least 50 percent of teacher evaluations on student data.
- Districts that signed on in Illinois will have student achievement count in at least 50 percent of teacher and principal evaluations by 2012-2013.
- The Obama administration will seek \$1.35 billion in next year’s budget to expand the competition.
- Many states submitted proposals which cost much more than what they could actually receive.
- Teacher and leader effectiveness is seen as the most important component—worth 138 out of 500 points—in the RT3 competition.

Will this race be, indeed, to the top?

### Did you know...

... to bring two credit cards on a trip, but use one to pay for everything in order to maximize frequent-flier miles and other bonuses. Use the second credit card for emergencies or if the credit line on the first is used up by “lock” charges that are imposed by many hotels and rental-car companies before a bill is paid. Take some traveler’s checks with you for situations when you can’t (or don’t want to) use your credit card. *Also*: Photocopy your credit cards and other important items in your wallet so that you will have account numbers and other key information if your wallet is lost or stolen. [www.TravelSmartNewsletter.com](http://www.TravelSmartNewsletter.com)



...silver is brighter than gold as an investment now, we hear from expert



Frank Holmes. Silver rose 53% in 2009, compared with 24% for gold, and is likely to keep outperforming because of its double benefit as a precious metal that provides inflation protection and an industrial material. While gold broke through its all-time high price in 2009, silver was recently at \$18/ounce, less than



half its peak of \$50 per ounce set in 1980. *Way to invest*: iShares Silver Trust (SLV), an exchange-traded fund (ETF), *recent share price*: \$18.15. Frank Holmes is the CEO and chief investment officer at US Global Investors, a mutual fund family with \$5 billion in assets that specializes in precious metals and natural resources, San Antonio. [www.USFunds.com](http://www.USFunds.com).

...prolonged use of a cell phone can cause cell-phone elbow—also known as *cubital tunnel*



*syndrome*—in which the arm’s ulnar nerve is compressed at the elbow. Symptoms include numbness and tingling in the small (pinkie) and ring fingers. *Self-defense*: During long cell-phone conversations, be sure to switch hands frequently...or consider using a headset. Also, avoiding prolonged periods where the elbow is tightly flexed while typing on the computer can help you avoid cell-phone elbow. Michael Darowish, MD, orthopedic surgeon, Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Hershey, Pennsylvania, and coauthor of a paper on cell-phone elbow, published in *Cleveland Clinic Journal of Medicine*.



**Sunday is Valentine’s Day – did you get something for your Valentine?**

**CHECK OUT THE NORTHERN ZONE WEBSITE – [www.northernzonemea.org](http://www.northernzonemea.org)**