

14-A UniServ Newsletter
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Eastsider

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WHERE'S DEB?

- Nov. 8-10 - Northern Zone Field Assistant Meeting - Crystal Mountain
9 - Travel in p.m.
10-11 - Northern Zone UniServ Meeting - Crystal Mountain
11 - Alpena EA Meeting with Rep. Pettalia – Alpena
11 - Occupy Alpena (all day) – downtown Alpena
17 - NMEA – BJ's, Gaylord
21 - East Jordan Board of Ed Mtg. – East Jordan
24-25 - **All MEA offices closed for Thanksgiving Break**
Dec. 6 - 14A MEA-Retired Luncheon – Alpena County Library
6 - 14A Coordinating Council Meeting – Alpena MEA office
7 - Region 14 Council, BJ's Gaylord



14A Public School Awareness Rallies Continue

MEA Secretary-Treasurer Rick Trainor joined 14A members on Saturday, November 5 in demonstrating against diverting educational funding to corporations and the continuing attacks on public school employees. He gave us several strategies for educating the community on how employees feel in the current political climate.

Strategy 1 – Ask one community member a day these two questions:

1. If your employer reduced your wages/salary by 20%, would you work harder?
2. If your employer mistreated you on a daily basis, would you do a better job?



Undoubtedly, the community member will answer, “No!” to both questions. It will then give you the opportunity to explain how the current legislators are reducing benefits, cutting wages, eliminating the school district’s ability to make its own decisions, and making school employees the scapegoats for a host of problems created by banks, mortgage companies, and Wall Street investors.

Strategy 2 – When someone outside of education accuses you of being overpaid, answer: “I earn every penny I am paid.”

Explain what your day to day schedule is like. Talk about the certifications and licenses you must maintain to do your job and what they cost. There are a set of skills, licenses, and abilities you have earned or acquired as an educational employee that the everyday citizen needs to hear about. You have knowledge and talent that makes you a valuable asset to the school community; let your pride show!

Bargaining Crisis in East Jordan – Why It Matters to You

The East Jordan EA and secretaries’ groups, going into their second year without a contract, are asking local units to send representatives and pack their Board meeting on Monday, November 21. The Thrun Law Firm attorney bargaining for



the Board is taking a hard line on the issues for these units. Some of the issues include: mandatory 3.5% cut in wages, with 1% additional cut in wage for each month the contract remains unsettled; mandating members take their parents' insurance benefits if they are less than 26 years old, or their spouse's insurance if the spouse's employer offers it; mandating unlimited class size, creating auditorium size classes or limiting grade school classrooms to one section. The attorney is also insisting all prohibited topics of bargaining are removed from the contracts, though the Board has not created policies to replace them.

Why does this matter to you? Many of our local districts use Thrun Law Firm attorneys to bargain. If these issues are imposed on the East Jordan units, the same issues will appear at our bargaining tables. If you cannot attend the November 21 Board meeting, you can send messages of support to the East Jordan EA and Office Personnel group. Call the 14A office for the address.

Insurance Training on December 15



Start preparing for the “new frontier” of insurance bargaining on December 15. This training session will run from 6 – 9 p.m. with MESSA field representative Kirk Bascom and 14A UniServ Director Deb Larson presenting. Dinner will be included, with the location to be announced. Eight units in the 14A service area will bargain this spring and need to send representatives, but all units in the 14A service area are encouraged to attend.

Free MESSA Posters Promote Wellness and Walking

Whether you have a wellness committee or not -- why not consider a walking campaign? The advantages are:

- Walking campaigns don't require a lot of work beyond the initial planning efforts.
- Walking is something most individuals can do.
- Schools, colleges and universities have excellent places to walk both indoors and outdoors before and after work hours.
- A campaign simply means planning a series of activities that have a defined beginning and ending time with a goal in mind. Examples: Have a 6-8 week walk where people select a destination to walk to or a distance – walk the distance of the Mackinac Bridge 10 times or a four week campaign where folks pledge to walk 2-3 times a week and bring a new person to walk with them each week. Keep it *fresh, fun* and *feasible!*



The 14A office has colorful 11 x 17 posters from MESSA that are available at the office for pick up.

Useful Websites:

Classics for Kids: Bring classical music into daily classroom activities. Includes lesson plans for K-5.

<http://www.classicsforkids.com/teachers/>

Choices Reading Lists: Booklists from children, young adults, teachers and librarians; includes downloadable bookmarks.

<http://reading.org/Resources/Booklists.aspx>

The Secret Life of Wild Animals: View video clips and read stories about wild animals; from the National Science Foundation

http://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/animals/index.jsp

Art Project: Explore museums from around the world, powered by Google:

<http://www.googleartproject.com/>

Knowledge@Wharton High School: the world of business from students' perspective. Includes information about teen-run companies and business trends.

<http://kwhs.wharton.upenn.edu/>