

workshops

CORE TRAINING

skill sets

WE WANT TO KNOW

A Fresh Start

MARY KEARNEY, EXEC. DIRECTOR

It is back to school and back to work for many of you. For MSEA members who continued to work over the summer, the relatively quiet time is over and the students have returned to scuff the polished floors and to clang their lockers shut. Administrators and teachers are once again issuing requests and demands with added urgency. One good thing about having a job that coincides with the school year is that we are given the chance to think of each September as a fresh start.

As you will see in the column to the right, the MSEA Board is looking with new eyes at delivering training. Another recurring dilemma could also benefit from a fresh look. We are forever seeking ways to get members actively involved in MSEA activities. We asked those who attended the chief steward training to tell us about their outside interests and/or talents. There are so many ways that people can help; we need to know each other a little better and we just need to ask!

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Fall Regionals Out

During the three-day MSEA Board meeting in July, the Board of Directors decided to take a new approach to training during the 2007-08 school year. After much discussion, the Board chose not to hold Fall Regional trainings in lieu of another, broader training opportunity. The Board felt that offering a more in-depth, core training would better serve MSEA members. This year the core trainings will be offered in January and February to allow sufficient time to develop the subject matter and produce the materials. Beginning in 2008-09, the core trainings will be offered in the fall to help leaders prepare for the upcoming year.



Winter Workshops In

This winter, MSEA will offer a Core Training workshop similar to last year's Chief Steward Training held in Brainerd. The same workshop will be offered twice, once in Mankato and once in Bemidji to attract as many interested members as possible. Specific times and locations are yet to be determined, however the dates are as follows:

January 25 & 26 - Mankato

February 1 & 2 - Bemidji

The MSEA staff identified a number of topics under the general heading of Core Trainings that include:

- MSEA Orientation
- How To Run A Unit - Best Practices
- New Member Dues
- Organizing 101
- Communications - Newsletters & Websites
- Representation - Discipline & Grievances
- Contract Negotiations
- Conflict Resolution
- Political Activism "This Is America"
- Diversity

The 07-08 Winter Core Training will feature topics from the above list. More information regarding these workshops will be sent to unit leaders as soon as it becomes available via regular mail and MSEA Highlights emails. Members can also check the MSEA website periodically for core training updates. We hope you'll join us!

msea

member benefits

VISIT WWW.MSEA-MN.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION

- ◆ ten \$500 annual scholarships (page 4)
- ◆ \$2,000 life insurance benefit
- ◆ \$2,000 accidental death insurance benefit
- ◆ low-cost auto/home/cycle insurance
- ◆ united educators credit union membership
- ◆ msea newsletter "the classified"
- ◆ valleyfair discounts (seasonal)
- ◆ member training
- ◆ retirement gift for full members
- ◆ mn zoo/imax theatre discount

"The Minnesota School Employees Association (MSEA), is a growing union which recognizes the dignity of the individual worker and the power of the organized body. It is a democratic union directed by its membership, and fiscally responsible to that membership. Through an empowered membership and a professional staff, MSEA provides the highest level of representation and service in the State of Minnesota."

MSEA

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting Schedule

Upcoming 2007-08 MSEA Board of Directors meetings:

September 22, 2007
October 27, 2007
December 1, 2007
January 19, 2008
February 9, 2008
March 15, 2008
April 18, 2008
July 30, 2008

Full members are welcome and encouraged to attend MSEA Board meetings. All meetings will be held in the MSEA office MSEA's address can be found in the upper left corner of this page.

The MSEA office building is a secure facility and not accessible to the general public after hours and on weekends. Please feel free to contact the MSEA office for instructions and directions on entering the MSEA building on weekends in order to attend a Board meeting.

Board Assignments

<u>Region</u>	<u>Director</u>
1	MJ Hanson
2	Sue Ames
3	Cindy Antonson
4	Patrick Wheeler
5	Kim Lennartson
6	Mary Schaufenbuel
7	Nona Bauer

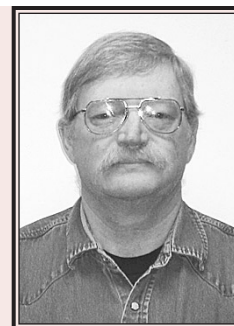
Budget/Personnel Committee

Diana Vogt, Chair
Cindy Antonson
Mary Schaufenbuel
Patrick Wheeler

Program/Planning Committee

MJ Hanson, Chair
Sue Ames
Nona Bauer
Kim Lennartson

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Another school year has started and I hope everyone had a nice summer. As noted on page one, the Board decided to eliminate the fall regionals this year and instead offer training for leaders and members interested in becoming leaders. Due to time constraints, the trainings will be held in late January or February of 2008, so please watch for agendas and dates.

In September, the Board is going to try starting committee meetings later on Friday so that the majority of the Board doesn't have to spend Thursday nights in St. Paul. I think we can make this work by communicating with each other more during the month and by utilizing email and other forms of communication. To allow this to work the Committee Chairperson is going to have to take more of a leadership role. By eliminating Thursday night hotel expenses, we can save an average of \$8,000 to \$12,000 a year.

On a different note, one of the things I've learned over this last year as President is that I have to set aside my personal views and look at what is best for MSEA overall. That said, in September I will bring to the Board a request for MSEA to join a coalition of state unions representing classified school employees throughout the United States. This coalition will allow MSEA to network and communicate with similar unions to discuss problems and solutions that all classified school employees face. The cost of joining this coalition is \$300 a year. Plus, if we have funds available and the Board approves, there would be one or two meetings a year that we should attend. I have come to learn that it is important for MSEA to communicate with other classified school employee unions. For the overall good we cannot allow MSEA to become an island onto itself. I want to stress that this is not a political coalition; this is a networking and communicating coalition. I am not saying that we wouldn't discuss and support federal legislation if it benefited our members, but the emphasis would be on communication.

If you would like to communicate with me, email me at evan@msea-mn.com. If you would like to talk with me on the phone, email me your phone number and best time to call and I will make every effort to call you. That way the call doesn't cost you anything. As your President it is always nice to hear from fellow members, to hear your ideas and also to hear any concerns you might have.

In Unity, MSEA President Evan Mapes

Spread The Word

Greetings from the Organizing Department! Fall is closely approaching and for many MSEA members it means school will be beginning and many of you will be returning to work. I hope you had a great summer.

This fall I hope to attend as many membership meetings as I can. As your Director of Organizing, I want to meet as many members as possible. Member organizing committees are an essential part of organizing new members into our union and I will be talking with you about forming organizing committees in your districts.



ARE THE UNION

We need members to talk with co-workers who are not part of our union about the benefits of joining MSEA. You interact daily with these unrepresented employees and can share with them what MSEA has to offer public school employees:

- ▶ Representing members
- ▶ Processing grievances & arbitrations
- ▶ Training unit officers & members
- ▶ Negotiating & enforcing contracts
- ▶ Legislative lobbying & monitoring

Other union benefits include:

- ▶ \$2,000 life insurance policy
- ▶ \$2000 accidental death policy
- ▶ Ten \$500 Nancy Crippen scholarships
- ▶ United Educators Credit Union
- ▶ Low- cost auto/home/cycle ins
- ▶ \$50 member organizing incentive

The Time Is Now

Let's all work together and build our union! There are many unorganized school workers who need a union and MSEA is that union. The more units that we represent in each school district, the more bargaining power we have. If you know of any employees in your school who might be interested in joining our union please feel free to contact me at tim@msea-mn.com or 651-227-3623 or 800-622-0289. We can and will do this together!

continued from page 1

How many of you have attended meetings where others went on and on about a problem, while you sat there with good ideas or perhaps even with a solution but were never asked? This is exactly why we asked members to tell us about themselves.

Where Do You Shine?

Current MSEA members have worked on political campaigns, many others have lobbied issues with school board members and other elected officials and a few have worked intensely with political parties. Our members have planned events and sing and play musical instruments. One member was a radio personality while another decorates cakes as a hobby. Other members cook and sew, golf, bowl and play softball. Some folks have specialized computer skills and still others like to mentor, write or even paint. We gathered this information from only a few of the members. We can only imagine what so many others of you can do!

Try to take a new look at your fellow unit members. Ask them what they like to do and then try to organize union activities around those interests. Finding out what people love to do is a great way to get them involved. You'll never know until you ask. And, once you ask, let us know too. Getting to know each other better just might help all of us.

BROWNS VALLEY FLOOD RECOVERY EFFORTS

More than 100 Browns Valley residents were forced to flee their homes when the Little Minnesota River spilled over its banks in March of 2007. Half the town was damaged by the flooding, displacing more than a dozen families and forcing some residents to pull their children out of school and leave for good.

MSEA has proudly represented the custodians and cooks in Browns Valley since 1980. Please consider making a donation to assist Browns Valley in their continuing struggle to recover from this disaster.

You Can Help

An ongoing recovery fund is currently assisting many Browns Valley families affected by the flood. A committee meets regularly to assess requests for assistance and manage the distribution of funds. Send donations to:

**Browns Valley Long-Term
Flood Recovery Fund
c/o Union State Bank, PO Box 334
Browns Valley MN 56219**

Book Offer

*Sherlock Holmes and the County
Courthouse Caper - 2007 Flood Edition*

Browns Valley's past, present and future are artfully linked in this second edition of Jeff Falkingham's popular work of historical fiction for young adults. The *County Courthouse Caper* tells the story of Browns Valley's frontier days, from the town's founding in the 1860's to the Traverse County Seat War in 1887. This special commemorative edition has been augmented with 18 photos including 10 from the flood of 2007 that damaged 140 homes in Browns Valley.

Every penny of the \$17 retail price of this book goes to a relief fund that will help ensure Browns Valley's ongoing recovery from the flood's devastation. To receive your copy, send a donation of \$17 or more (plus \$3 shipping and handling) to:

**BV Flood Relief
PO Box 307
Browns Valley MN 56219**

MSEA NANCY CRIPPEN EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

MSEA awards ten \$500 scholarships to full members and/or their dependent children seeking post-secondary education each year.

Nancy Crippen served as MSEA's Executive Director from 1986 until her death in 1996. Nancy's commitment to education was demonstrated through her service on the Worthington, Minnesota Board of Education and her dedication to bettering the working conditions of classified school employees throughout the public school system in Minnesota. Nancy herself had attended graduate school at the U of M and taken classes at the Hubert Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, while her husband, Gary, served as an appellate-court judge on the MN Court of Appeals. Nancy and Gary passed on to their seven children the value of education as each of those children went on to receive various levels of higher education degrees. This scholarship was named in her memory to honor Nancy's strong belief that "our children are our future and we must teach them well."

APPLICATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED OR FAXED TO MSEA BY MARCH 1st EACH YEAR.

Mail: 190 E 5th St, #750
St Paul MN 55101

Fax: 651-297-6814 or 888-329-6732
Phone: 651-227-3623 or 800-622-0289 (toll free)

APPLICANT _____ ISD _____

MSEA MEMBER NAME _____ RELATIONSHIP TO MEMBER _____

ADDRESS _____ HOME # _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION _____

FIELD OF STUDY _____

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE RULES and PROCEDURES

1. The Scholarship committee will be comprised of two members of the Board of Directors and three members at large.
2. Scholarship recipients must be MSEA members or their dependent children.
3. Committee members and/or their dependent children are eligible for the NCES.
4. Scholarship shall be chosen by random selection.
5. Ten \$500.00 scholarships will be awarded, three for MSEA members and seven for dependent children of MSEA members seeking post-secondary education.
6. If MSEA does not receive enough eligible applications for each type of scholarship, the scholarship(s) will be awarded to an applicant of the other group.
7. Incomplete applications shall not be considered.
8. Scholarships will be announced each year at the Delegate Assembly.
9. Award money will be distributed upon proof of payment for educational courses.
10. Recipients must claim their award for expenses incurred during the current academic school year (Sept.-Aug.) or within two years from the date of notification of the award.

team effort

CASS LAKE MEDIATION

BONI LOEWE & LORI K. CARLSON

Preparation Is Key

Last September (06/07), eight Elementary para/bus monitors returned to their jobs only to realize their hours had been cut by a half hour a day, which was in violation of the contract language regarding seniority and reductions.

After several attempts by Stewards Amy Woodford and Deb Croaker to resolve this issue with the district, a grievance was filed on behalf of all affected employees. The team of Deb Croaker, Amy Woodford, Mike Hanson and Boni Loewe met with Rep Lori Carlson for more than six hours one evening to strategize and prepare for Grievance Mediation. The team gathered evidence, made copies and assembled casebooks for this mediation. Contract language was flagged and highlighted, spreadsheets were created to show the harm of the district's actions against MSEA members and issue statements were refined for presentation. The team again gathered the next day prior to mediation to discuss who would present the case to the mediator. After discussion with the team, Amy Woodford agreed to be the main presenter with Field Rep Lori Carlson and the rest of the team backing her up.

Successful Outcome

The team met with the Superintendent, Business Manager, School Board Member and the BMS Mediator. Amy did an incredible job presenting the case to the mediator, and each team member contributed by making legal arguments (previously discussed and planned) during the proceedings to support the case and Amy's presentation. After three hours of mediation, the team reached a settlement of 75% of the total lost wages and benefits to be paid to the eight affected employees, an amount totaling over \$6,900. The team was able to settle this matter without going to arbitration, saving time and additional costs. By using this process, they also preserved the working relationship between the district and MSEA.

This was a wonderful example of how this process is supposed to work and Lori is proud of the team and their accomplishments! As a side note, the mediator commented to both the team and Lori that the team's prep work and casebook is what made the difference in MSEA's success in this matter!



Cass Lake grievance team: Boni Loewe, Deb Croaker, Amy Woodford (not pictured: Mike Hanson)

webTRIVIA

full members only

Beginning in October, a trivia question about MSEA will be posted on the MSEA website from the 1st through the 14th of **each month**. Members who guess the correct answer will become eligible to win a free MSEA charcoal gray fleece vest. (pictured on the MSEA website)

how to play

CLICK on the **webTRIVIA** link on the front page of the MSEA website (www.msea-mn.com) to view the monthly trivia question.

SEARCH the MSEA website for the correct answer.

SUBMIT your answer via the link on the MSEA website before midnight on the 14th of each month.

ONE WINNER will be drawn at random from the correct answers and will receive a new MSEA charcoal gray fleece vest.

rules

*One trivia question will be posted on the MSEA website from the 1st through the 14th of each month. *Answers to all trivia questions can be found somewhere on the MSEA website. ***Full members only** may submit **one** answer per trivia question via a link on the front page of the MSEA website before midnight of the 14th of each month. *Subsequent or duplicate answers or answers submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

*One winner for each question will be drawn at random from the correct answers submitted before the deadline. *A MSEA vest will be sent to each winner and his/her name will be published on the website and in upcoming MSEA newsletters. *Any member may receive only one MSEA vest per school year.

test your knowledge about msea!

Quote

The history of the labor movement needs to be taught in every school in this land. America is a living testimonial to what free men and women - organized in free, democratic unions can do to make a better life. We ought to be proud of it!

Vice President Hubert Humphrey Jr.

MSEA
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St Paul MN 55101

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DEADLINES & DETAILS

did you know?

Members On Leave

If you wish to remain an active member while on a leave of absence from your district, you must notify MSEA in writing and pay a one-time yearly due of \$25. If you return to work at some point during the school year, the \$25 payment will be applied to your total dues amount for the current year. Maintaining active status with MSEA allows you to receive all mailings and meeting notices during the year, vote on contract proposals and ratifications and hold a local or state office. It will also allow you to be eligible for all MSEA member-only benefits. Please notify Lynn Jansen (lynn@msea-mn.com) as soon as possible if you wish to maintain active status during a leave of absence. Additional MSEA contact information is listed on page two of this newsletter. Have a good year!

Local Budgets Due November

Units maintaining local budgets must submit their 06-07 End-of-the-Year Budget and their 07-08 Projected Budget to MSEA by Nov. 1st. After Dec. 1st, MSEA will withhold local dues from any unit not in compliance. (per the MSEA Unit Treasury Financial Code of Standards)

e-Communications

Are you "in the loop" regarding MSEA news and events? MSEA now emails periodic *MSEA Highlights* to all chief stewards and other interested members who have provided MSEA with an email address. Any full member may sign up to receive the *MSEA Highlights* emails.

Earth Friendly

In an effort to reduce MSEA printing and postage costs as well as eliminate excess paper waste, full members may now receive the quarterly MSEA *Classified* newsletter via email (pdf attachment) instead of through regular mail.

Adobe Acrobat software is required to open and read pdf documents, which is available for free download off the main page of the MSEA website. (www.msea-mn.com)

Interested in receiving the MSEA *Highlights* or *Classified* newsletter via email? We are happy to add you to this growing email list of "plugged in" members. Contact Melissa Gara at the MSEA office today at 800.622.0289 or: melissa@msea-mn.com.