



Inkwell

Eau Claire Association of Educators



www.ecteachers.org

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My Year In Review

Ron "Duff" Martin, ECAE President

Every time an activity or event ends I sit back in my chair, relax and let out a sigh of relief—only to be greeted by yet another activity, phone call, meeting, or deadline. It really never ends.

That has been my year as your president of ECAE. Of course I realize this was a huge learning curve. I am thankful for my past seven years on the executive board; this has helped ease the amount of time I would have spent having to learn a lot of new things in order to carry out the duties of the president. I can't imagine not having had that experience, coupled with lots and lots of connections on the state level and be able to perform the job of the president. The highlights for my past year as president include:

Summer Months (June, July & August)

- Participating and winning a grievance.
- Retiree insurance problems.
- NEA Representative Assembly in Washington D.C.
- Participated in the WEAC screening of candidates for the 68th Assembly seat.
- WEAC Board Orientation and Summer Academy.
- New Teacher Orientation.
- WEAC Board of Directors retreat and Summer Academy.
- ECASD & ECAE Back To School—Kick-off.
- Attended all board of education meetings in summer months.



Fall Months (September, October, & November)

- Building Representative Training.
- Hiring a new office assistant, Carol Miller.
- Meeting with the Chippewa Valley Retired Teachers group.
- Helped organize American Education Week.
- Helped organize and establish joint meetings with ECAE & Teaching and Learning.
- Spoke at the Fall Student-WEA Conference.
- iMIDAS updates (membership).
- Planned and led "I Can Do It" classroom management workshop.
- Met with all principals in the district.
- Worked on the campaigns of Kristen Dexter, Jeff Smith, and Barrack Obama.



Winter Months (December, January, February)

- Worked with the personnel office on employment timelines and procedures.
- Attended REAL DEAL Conference in North Carolina (Teacher Working Conditions & Principal Evaluations).
- Worked on ECAE's new website.
- Worked on and organized school board endorsement and elections.
- My first radio show interview with Mary Jo Wagner, West Wisconsin (public radio).
- Attended NEA Midwest Leadership Conference.



Spring Months (March, April, and May)

- Organized a very successful Legislative Banquet.
- Participated in the NEA's Read Across America visiting and reading at elementary schools.
- Was involved in the Legislative hearings for Mandatory Kindergarten attendance.
- Testified in front of the Joint Finance Committee.
- Involved and engaged in the school board elections.
- Lots and lots of meetings!!



It has been a busy year! I have enjoyed serving as your president this past year and look forward to next year. I am always available for the membership!

Thanks, Ron "Duff" Martin



Important Dates:

- 05/04 BOE Meeting
- 05/04-05 ECAE Elections and Constitutional Bylaw Changes
- 05/06 Exec. Board Meeting
- 05/18 BOE Meeting
- 05/20 BR Meeting
- 05/28 Retirement Banquet and Celebration of Service



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A Place Where Sunflowers Grow
By Amy Lee-Tai,
illustrated by Felicia Hoshino.

Children's Book Press,
www.childrensbookpress.org

Even under the harsh conditions of the Topaz internment camp for Japanese-Americans, beauty can still grow, thanks to a young girl, her art teacher, and a pack of sunflower seeds. The book is inspired by the author's own family experiences in the camp.



NEA's Read Across America—Building a Nation of Readers May is Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month *Carole Galloy*

Tip of the Month: When it comes to volunteers for your Read Across America activities, don't forget NEA-Retired, student, education support professionals and higher education members. They're a terrific resource to tap into if you're looking for organizers, guest readers, or promoters of your program.

Link of the Month: Looking for more resources on Asian and Pacific Islander history? Go to the Asian American Curriculum Project, www.asianamericanbooks.com. You'll find book reviews, lesson plans, blogs, and Web links.

Activity of the Month: Honor your favorite authors and characters during Children's Book Week, May 11-17. You can dress up as your favorite character and put reading on parade or invite a local author to speak at your school. Create a display of your favorite books in your school and classroom.

May Literacy Dates:

May 5 National Teacher Day www.nea.org

May 11-17 Children's Book Week www.cbcbooks.org/cbw

May 11-17 Reading Is Fun Week www.rif.org

Read Across America
www.nea.org/readacross

National Teacher Appreciation Week THANK A TEACHER

Eau Claire educators invest all of themselves in their work each day, and our students' top test scores and high graduation rates are proof of their dedication. May 3-9 is National Teacher Appreciation Week.

May 5, 2009 is National Teacher Day. This year, the Wisconsin PTA and the Wisconsin Public Relations Association will join WEAC in promoting the week-long celebration of educators who ensure that our great schools benefit everyone.

ELECTIONS FOR ECAE OFFICERS/ COMMITTEE CHAIRS: (Voting takes place May 4 & 5)

President: Ron "Duff" Martin (Running unopposed)

Vice President: Chris Hambuch-Boyle
(Running unopposed)

Secretary: Lynn Verdon (Running unopposed)

Negotiations Chair: James Martin
(Gretchen Beckstrom withdrew her nomination)

PreK-5 Elementary

Representative: Brian Wiltgen (Running unopposed)

Congratulations ECAE Scholarship Award Winners

Kaitlyn Forke—MHS
Jocelyn Kaese—NHS
James Pierson—MHS
Laura Schwengel—MHS
Nicole Valk—MHS

These five students were selected from 27 outstanding candidates.

Congratulations to Our 2009 ECAE Retirees (As of 05-01-09)

Patricia Binder—34 years of Service (Elementary Art)
Pegi Bowe – 30 Years of Service (North High School)
Kathleen Braaten – 31 Years of Service (North High School)
Deborah Halaychik – 23 Years of Service (District)
Brenda Hansen – 20 Years of Service (Meadowview Elementary)
Jane Hermundson – 31 Years of Service (Lakeshore Elementary)
Cheryl O'Connell – 34 Years of Service (Sam Davey Elementary)
Louise Rogers – 23 Years of Service (Roosevelt Elementary)
Gary Schwoch – 27 Years of Service (DeLong Middle School)
Irene Swoboda – 35 Years of Service (Sherman Elementary)
David Turner – 30 Years of Service (North High School)

Insurance Update

Gretchen Beckstrom

After much haggling and meeting with insurance reps and committee members, we finally agreed to accept Group Health Cooperative (GHC) as our Health insurance provider. We went from initial bids of 55% increases to 30.2%. With this new policy, we will need to become educated on how this will work.

First, what's the same?

You can keep your same doctors. The network includes Luther/Middlefort and Marshfield/Sacred Heart-plus a lot more. The deductibles remain at \$1000/2000 with our matching HRA. Your annual physical exams are still covered at 100%. Many of the same coverages remain.

So, what's different?

Office co-pays are \$18 from \$20, the emergency co-pay is \$100 (not \$80). The prescription drug is still a 3-tier system with generic drugs at \$0, brand name at \$25, and non-formulary at 50% (with a max of \$75 per fill). There are a few other changes, with the most notable being a Wellness Plan component. Our team saw this as a beneficial way to help hold insurance costs down (leaving more money in salary) and more importantly, it could keep us healthier. The plan emphasizes prevention and early detection/control of potentially chronic diseases. The wellness plan **requires the participation of active employees and their spouse**. This entails a three-step process of 1) a 10 minute biometric screening of height, weight, blood pressure and BMI, 2) an online health risk assessment/questionnaire, and 3) a visit with a health coach who will go over your results with you (online, by phone, or in person) and may make suggestions to help you improve your overall wellness. These steps must be completed by October 15, 2009.

GHC will be flexible with times and sites to ensure that we get 100% participation in the wellness plan. With at least 90% participation, we will be guaranteed a cap of 14% in the second year. GHC has a proven track record with both the City of Eau Claire employees and the Rice Lake teachers—keeping their costs in the single digits in the second year.

This translates into healthier employees and higher salaries. It is imperative that we all participate in this plan and help ourselves as well as our co-workers. Those who choose to NOT participate in the wellness plan will see an increase in their insurance rates (about 3%) as of November 1, 2009. Look for information meetings along with open enrollment coming **SOON!**

E-mail Etiquette

When We converse, we expect other people to observe certain rules of behavior. The same is true for e-mail, the most popular form of online communication. Here are a few pointers to help you communicate more effectively.

1. Clearly summarize your message in the subject line.
2. Don't use the CC (Carbon Copy) function to copy your message to everyone.
3. Use BCCs (Blind Carbon Copies) when addressing a message that will go to a large group of people who don't necessarily know each other.
4. Keep your messages short and focused.
5. Avoid using all capital letters.
6. Don't write anything you wouldn't say in public.
7. Use a smiley to make sure that a statement is not misunderstood.
8. Avoid sending e-mail to large numbers of people unless you have a serious reason to do it.
9. Nasty e-mail should also be avoided.
10. As a courtesy to your recipient, include your name at the bottom of the message.

2009 Celebration of Service Retirement Banquet

All Are Invited To Join The Celebration!

The retirees from all the unions and groups in our District will be honored

ECAE Scholarship Awardees Will Be Introduced and Honored

When: Thursday May 28, 2009

Where: The Florian Gardens
2340 Lorch Ave., Eau Claire WI

Time: 5:00 Cash Bar
6:00 Dinner/Program

Reserve Tickets No Later Than May 20:

Email Jeanne Rowe: jrowe@ecasd.k12.wi.us

Or Phone Jeanne Rowe: 852-3054

Make check payable to ECASD Banquet Fund

Send to: Jeanne Rowe, Personnel Office

Eau Claire School District

500 Main Street

Eau Claire WI 54701

Or Send Through District Mail



Here's a little bit of ECAE trivia:

What is the most common last name of members in ECAE?

Becker, Bowe, Fisher, Galloy, Larson, Webber, Williams (3)

Martin and Thompson (4)

Anderson, Brown, Peterson (5)

Olson (6)

Miller (7)

Smith (8)

**#1 Name—
JOHNSON (18)**



POWERFUL WORDS

What three words have a total of only 14 letters yet carry a great deal of meaning? People may not notice these words when they're there, but if you forget to use them, you'll come across looking disrespectful and ungrateful. Give up? These very powerful words are "Please" and "Thank You."



E CAE's Legislative Banquet was held on Tuesday, March 31 at the Ramada Inn Convention Center in Eau Claire. In attendance were Sen. Kreitlow, Rep. Smith and Rep. Dexter, along with several ECASD board members as well as members of our Association. Our legislators answered questions concerning school funding reform, early childhood funding and abolishing the QEO. It was an elegant and professional evening, and included a lovely meal. Next year plan to attend, meet your legislators and ask questions!

Legislative Banquet



The WEAC Representative Assembly was held in La Crosse on April 24-26. Duff Martin, Phil Hurlburt, Dave Wiltgen, Bryan Wiltgen, Matt Kulaseiwicz, Sue Fulkerson, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Kathy Peterson, Lynn Verdon, Gretchen Beckstrom, Pamela Larson and I had a great time meeting with other WEAC members from around the state, voting on new/amended bylaws, voting for our officers and socializing. The highlight of the event was the acceptance speech by Memorial H.S. student, Noah Williams who was awarded a WEAC scholarship. Noah thanked his family and ECASD teachers for their support. Congratulations, Noah. You deserve it.

Representative Assembly



The Whole World (Wide Web) is Watching, *Michael D. Simpson, NEA Office of General Counsel*



ay back in 1974, California teacher and aspiring actor Lou Zivkovich famously was fired for posing nude in Play-girl magazine. His response, as reported by Newsweek, “I didn’t murder anyone.”

Nowadays, thanks to advances in technology, you don’t even need a major publisher to get fired; just post your racy photos, sexually graphic writings, or wild party stories on a personal Web blog. You’ll be amazed by how quickly tech-savvy students can disseminate your postings to their friends and your employer.


Here’s a round of some of the recent horror stories:

- In Virginia, high school art teacher Stephen Murmer was fired after posting photos of his “butt art” on the Web, which were viewed by scores of students. The budding artist applied paint to his posterior and genitalia, which he then pressed onto canvases. With the help of the ACLU, he sued the school district last fall claiming a violation of his First Amendment rights.
- Band director Scott Davis from Broward County, Florida, was dismissed after school officials viewed his MySpace profile that included his musings about sex, drugs, and depression.
- A Colorado English teacher lost her job after composing and posting sexually explicit poetry on her MySpace site. Police were even called in to investigate.
- Nashville teacher Margaret Thompson was removed from teaching after posting “racy pictures” of herself, along with candid photos of her students, on her MySpace profile.
- Florida middle school teacher John Bush was terminated because of “offensive” and “unacceptable” photos and information on his MySpace page.
- But what about free speech? Don’t school employees have the right, on their own time, to blog about their about their private lives without fear of losing their jobs? Probably not.
- It’s the general rule that school employees can be disciplined for off-duty conduct if the school district can show that the conduct had an adverse impact on the school or the teacher’s ability to teach. And it wouldn’t be too difficult to make that showing if the teacher’s blog includes sexually explicit or other inappropriate content and is widely viewed by students.

There’s an old lawyer’s saw that goes something like this: Never put in writing anything that you wouldn’t want read in open court or by your mother. Maybe it’s time for an updated adage: Never put in electronic form anything that you wouldn’t want viewed by a million people, including your colleagues, students, and supervisors-and your mother.

Union 101: Just Cause

Duff Martin

 ne negative stereotype of unions is that they “protect bad employees.” The fact is that unions protect all employees. This typically occurs through the negotiation of “just cause” or “good cause” protection from discipline and termination. All non-probationary educators represented by ECAE have such protections.

So, what constitutes “just cause?” One could easily define just cause as not just, i.e., because a supervisor doesn’t like a person. Generally, there are seven factors that constitute just cause which the employer must meet in order to discipline or terminate an employee, including:

1. Notice: Did the employer provide fore warning of the possible consequences of he employee’s disciplinary conduct?
2. Reasonable Rule: Was the Employer’s rule reasonably related to the operation of their business or the performance the Employer may properly expect of the employee?
3. Investigation: Did the Employer, before disciplining the employee, make an effort to discover whether the employee did, in fact, violate a rule?
4. Fair Investigation: Was the Employer’s investigation conducted fairly and objectively?
5. Proof: Did the investigation produce “proof” that the employees was guilty as charged?
6. Equal Treatment: Has the Employer applied its rules even-handedly to all employees?
7. Penalty: Was the degree of discipline administered by the Employer reasonably related to the seriousness of the proven offense and the employee’s past work record?

With a “just cause” standard, employee’s have the assurance that they cannot be disciplined or terminated for arbitrary or illegitimate reasons. Without just cause protection, employees can be terminated “just because.”

Cleaning closets or garages?
Looking for a bargain?

BARGAIN BLITZ

List your items in the
Inkwell Bargain Blitz!

Deadline for submitting materials is the **15th of each month**. Sorry, no personal ads.
Send items to Carole Galloy at: cgalloy@ecasd.k12.wi.us

SELL: 16' Romany sea kayak. Fiberglass, like new. Asking \$1500. Email Gretchen gbeckstrom@ecasd.k12.wi.us or call 833-8089.

SELL: 3+ bedroom ranch style house on Eau Claire's South side. Large lot with a sprinkler system. Maintenance free, new roof, windows, dishwasher and stove. 2+ attached garage. \$179,900. Call Kathy at 835-7997.

ESTATE SALE: 421 W Fillmore St. (off of State St.). May 28, 29, and 30th. Antiques, furs, furniture, old books, tools and much, much more! Kathy Kattestad, 835-7997.

SELL: 1996 14' Lund Rebel fishing boat w/25 hp Merc tiller. Live well, trolling motor, 2 elect. anchors, swivel seats, and locator. Excellent shape. \$4,500. Call Dave at 235-4254.

SELL: 2001 Starcraft 21' Hybrid Camper. Sleeps 7, a/c, furnace, bath/shower, microwave, stereo, refrigerator, and more. Great shape. \$6,500. Call Dave at 235-4264.

SELL: Lots of treasures at the Ashmore shed, E6048 852nd Avenue, Colfax, Wis. Mother's day weekend, Saturday and Sunday, May 9th and 10th. You won't leave empty handed! 715-933-0103 Two Miles north of Jake's super club on Lake Tainter, Menomonie, Wisconsin Furniture, small collectibles, and antiques. Just follow the signs! Cedar Falls has their garage sale days too! Marlene Ashmore

SELL: 2003 Chevrolet Blazer, ZR2 2 door, yellow with 53,000 miles, power windows, power seats, power locks, power moon roof, 6 disc factory cd player, factory tinted windows. \$8000. Please contact Cate Russell 559-4383.

SELL: Like New Sky Flute. Used 5-6 times. Great for entry level band students. Sells for \$199.00. Will let go for \$100.00. Contact Dawn Marcott at dmarcott@ecasd.k12.wi.us

WANTED: In search of clothes line poles. I'd be happy to dig up your old ones. Contact Patti Campbell at pcampbell@ecasd.k12.wi.us

WANTED: Used recreational kayak, jacket and paddle. Call Bill Simon 852-5295.

WANTED: Piano. Email Lori lwolf@ecasd.k12.wi.us

WOMEN WHO PAINT: Interior/exterior. Reasonable rates and highly experienced. Call Gretchen Beckstrom at 833-8089 or email gbeckstrom@ecasd.k12.wi.us

SELL: Foosball table in excellent condition. Heavy duty construction, similar to a bar table. \$200. Contact Todd at tlavalley@ecasd.k12.wi.us

SELL: Monique Alto Sax. Upper level student sax in excellent condition. Recently serviced, I have the receipts. Includes nice case, neck strap, etc, and music stand, \$475.00. Contact Todd at tlavalley@ecasd.k12.wi.us

SELL: LeBlanc Symphonie Wooden clarinet. Made in France. Excellent playing condition. \$750 Call Sharon Seymour 855-1108

SELL: 1995 Toyota Camry LE Sedan 4 Door/4cyl. Emerald Green with gold package, only 69,700 miles. Asking \$6,900. If interested call Kris Pressler (715) 577-4862.

SELL: Wooden swing set system—2 swings, glider, basketball hoop, platform house with steps and slide—\$120 Call Pegi and Glen Bowe at 456-3676 or 832-2676.

SELL: 2003 VW Passat wagon in great condition. Very clean. Asking \$6,900 Chuck Henning 878-4224 or email chenning@ecasd.k12.wi.us.

SELL: Vic Firth percussion kit purchased new (backpack style case). Asking \$150.00. Contact Gay Lynn Handrick at ghandrick@ecasd.k12.wi.us

SELL: Pier 1 Imports papasan chair and ottoman. Very good condition. \$50 OBO. Contact Holly Bobo at 839.7997 or hbobo@ecasd.k12.wi.us

SELL: To settle an estate—2 bedroom home in Altoona, 119 Bartlett Avenue. Large landscaped, fenced yard. Contact Kathy Peterson at kpeterson@ecasd.k12.wi.us

WANTED: Your items for sale. Your ad could appear here. Just email Carole Galloy: cgalloy@ecasd.k12.wi.us



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**Calling All Photographers! Take photos of teachers in classrooms for the Inkwell.
Send to cgalloy@ecasd.k12.wi.us.**