

**VOLUME 33, ISSUE 1
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Ring, Ring, Goes the Bell!

Across Northeast Iowa, those yellow buses are rolling! Food service staffs are mixing and baking! Phones are being answered by office personnel. Teachers along with aides/associates are assessing what was forgotten over the summer. Staffs at the AEAs and at NICC are also hard at work. Custodians are once again cleaning the floors that were spic and span just a few weeks ago. Yes, the 2008-09 school year has started.

For those of you returning to membership in your local association, Northeast Iowa Education Unit, Iowa State Education Association, and the National Education Association, welcome back! For those of you who are first time members as certified professionals or educational support professionals, welcome to membership! If you are still thinking of membership, we urge you to join the organization that will best provide you with the financial benefits, opportunities to enhance your professional career, and representation in support of public education.

NEA, ISEA, NEIEU, and your local associations need your ideas, your time, and your talents to promote public education. Thank you for your membership in the groups most dedicated to the welfare of students and public educators in Iowa and across the country.

Geography 101

What stretches from Eastern Allamakee to Riceville, south to Hudson and Cedar Falls, east to Edgewood-Colesburg (with a short jog to Peosta) and north to Monona and Waukon? If you guessed, the Northeast Iowa Education Unit (NEIEU), you are absolutely right! Bev Crumb-Gesme, one of the Uniserv Directors, has an office in Dubuque. Kevin McDermott, the other Director, and Linda Alderson, the office associate, are in the Waterloo office. When Uniserv units were created, the intent was to provide “members and locals with professional staff and necessary support staff services and facilities to implement, improve and coordinate programs of the United Education Profession.” “Uniserv” stands for “Unified Services.” NEIEU has forty-eight local associations. There are thirty-three K-12 teacher locals; eleven K-12 educational support professional (ESP) locals; and faculty and ESP associations at both Keystone AEA and Northeast Iowa Community College.

ISEA Disaster Fund

Tornadoes, rain, floods, muck and yuck! Those words sum up the late spring and summer of 2008. Even though school has started, many members and people across Northeast Iowa are still dealing with the after-effects of the summer disasters. As a result of the Parkersburg tornado, ISEA created the ISEA Disaster Relief Effort with an original donation of \$1000. As more members were impacted by the flooding, ISEA increased its contribution to \$5000. Across the state, members contributed money to the fund, but it didn't stop there. Delegates, at the NEA Representative Assembly in July in Washington, D.C., also dug deep into their pockets and gave money to be used for the relief effort. The relief fund has grown to over \$40,000.

What is the intent of this fund? The money is to be used to defray the replacement of classroom supplies and materials that teachers and ESP members had purchased over the years with their own money. The funds will be distributed to local associations, and those locals will decide how best to distribute the money to members. As soon as possible, go to www.isea.org and complete the on-line application for funds. If you and/or your local association want to contribute to the fund, make the checks payable to ISEA and write “Disaster Relief Effort” on the check memo line. Send the check to ISEA Disaster Relief Effort, 777 3rd Street, Des Moines, IA, 50309. This is another example of how ISEA members help each other and how membership pays!

Excellence in Education Award

Most of us have had teachers who have influenced our lives. Mr. Grange, Madame Moraine, Mr. Gibson, and Mrs. Pickard were my major influences. Teachers change lives when they educate. To honor a teacher who has changed your life or the life of your child, nominate him/her for the Excellence in Education Award sponsored by ISEA, Iowa Farm Bureau, KDSM Fox 17, and WHO News Radio 1040. The winner and his/her school will receive cash prizes and be honored at a ceremonial banquet in Des Moines. Go to www.isea.org to look for the on-line nomination form. This is another way you can thank a teacher. The nomination deadline is September 12th.

ISEA Decals

Ever wonder who designed the cute decals you found in your membership materials envelope? Every year, ISEA sponsors a "Design a Decal" contest for Iowa art students. Decals made by students in first grade through twelfth grade are judged in their appropriate grade level categories. Over 350 high-quality designs were submitted to ISEA last spring. Art students of David Prehm, high school art teacher in New Hampton, have been contest winners many times. This year is no exception. Tabitha Bliss, eleventh grade, won with "Sweet". Twelfth grader, Abigail Bartz's winner was "Smooth Sailing". Sophie Weis, grade 1 at the John Cline elementary building in Decorah, won with "Cool!" Her teacher is Amy Winter. Each student and teacher receives a plaque with all the winning decals depicted on the plaque. Art teachers, watch for details of the 2009 Contest next spring. Congratulations to the winning students and teachers! *Art Rocks!*

If you want additional decals, go to www.isea.org; click on the Access card picture to go to the "Members Only" section and then click on ISEA Store on the left side. Sheets of decals are twenty cents each plus shipping and handling. Combine your order for decals with an order for an ISEA beverage mug, luggage tag, badge holder, ink pen, tote bag, and other ISEA merchandise. You can see the merchandise pictured and download an order form. Show your pride in your ISEA membership with these fun and practical items

ISEA Membership Pays!

As a new member of ISEA, you will receive an Access card mailed to your home address in late fall after membership processing. Watch for the cards! They are valid for two years. Access cards for continuing members will be good until fall, 2009. Go to www.isea.org/members to search for discounts by using your Access card. You may need to print a coupon. Save money at Pizza Hut, Best Western Hotels, Jiffy Lube, Target, Quiznos, and other participating businesses across Iowa and the country. These are only a few of the businesses or savings opportunities. Go to www.neamb.com for NEA Member Benefits for additional savings on insurance, car rentals, and savings programs.

Start Your Year Right!

File transcripts in a timely manner if you earned credits for salary schedule advancement.

Review your personnel file and make a list or copy of all the contents. If there are inappropriate items, notify your contract maintenance chair and/or Uniserv Director. Make periodic reviews of your file.

Start your own personnel file. Include such things as your license, college transcript, letters of praise or reprimand, evaluations and responses, student accidents or incident notes, and letters from administrators/supervisors.

Keep a daily log of problems you might face with students, administrators; colleagues, parents, or community members. Include dates, times and brief descriptions and/or witnesses. DO NOT leave this log at school.

Confirm your seniority list for accuracy when it is published. If there is an error, work for immediate correction.

Verify your salary and other conditions of your individual contract so they are in accordance with the Master Contract. Compare your first paycheck with the contractual amount so errors can be corrected immediately.

Check the insurance(s) in which you participate at school. There may need to be changes for name and/or family status. Get information about different carriers, plans, and deductibles.

Review the Master Contract, staff handbook, and Board policies to be aware of various procedures, do's and don'ts, and other policies that may have changed.

Think before you send e-mail messages or access sites on the school's computer. Use the school's computer for school related activities and not personal business. Assume you have no privacy when using the school's system. Be very careful when sending messages to colleagues, parents, and students. Keep the content professional! Employees have been terminated for incorrect usage of school equipment.

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