

SPECIAL EDITION

The Union Bug

Published for the members of the United Staff Union

2006-2007 USU Officers & Contact Information

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NOVEMBER 7 IS ELECTION DAY

This is a special issue of *The Union Bug* dedicated to election issues and voting. Because all of our jobs are dependent on the success of **public education**, we should view elections, at least in part, from that perspective. And we should definitely **participate** in the process.

If we do not actively **participate** in the process which culminates in voting, we will have no one to blame but ourselves when things go bad for **public education** and the people that ultimately employ all of us.

And I do not care where in the USU family you are. All of us depend on **public education** for a job. If **public education** goes down, we will surely go down as well. Without **public education** there will be no WEAC, no WEA Trust and no UniServs. When we **vote**, we are participating in a process that could have significant **consequences** in our jobs.

So do your research, chose your candidates closely and cast your ballot. As you do so, think about your future.

WEAC HELPS IN THE RESEARCH

Because WEAC understands that the success of public education is important to their members, they have a long standing process to evaluate candidates and incumbents on their positions in public education.

They screen candidates, interview them, and give them the opportunity to answer questionnaires about the important issues of the public education. Screening committees made up of WEAC members send their recommendations to the WEAC Board. The Board reviews their recommendations, perhaps modifies them, and then puts out a ballot to all members in a particular race. Only after that exhaustive review does a person get to be a WEAC recommended candidate.

Having participated in this process for over 20 years, as both a WEAC member and a USU member, I believe that when it comes to education, a WEAC recommended candidate has the best qualifications to represent public education which will in turn ultimately affect our jobs.

WEAC RECOMMENDED CANDIDATES

Below are all of WEAC's recommended candidates in this year's election. You are allowed to take this list into the ballot box with you and use it for reference. Why trust your memory.

If you are unsure of which candidates are from your area, you can find out who will be on the ballot from your area by checking out the website <http://waml.legis.state.wi.us/>. In this way you can have a much shorter list with you when you go into that polling place.

Congressional

U.S. Senate	Herb Kohl (D)
Congressional Dist 1	No recommendation
Congressional Dist 2	Tammy Baldwin (D)
Congressional Dist 3	Ron Kind (D)
Congressional Dist 4	Gwen Moore (D)
Congressional Dist 5	Brian Kennedy (D)
Congressional Dist 6	No recommendation
Congressional Dist 7	David Obey (D)
Congressional Dist 8	Steve Kagen (D)

Statewide

Governor	Jim Doyle (D)
Lt. Governor	Barbara Lawton (D)
Attorney General	Kathleen Falk (D)
Secretary of State	No recommendation
State Treasurer	No recommendation

State Senate

Only the odd numbered state senate races are up on the 2006 fall elections:

Senate District 1	Charles Most, Jr. (D)	Senate District 19	No screening, NR
Senate District 3	Tim Carpenter (D)	Senate District 21	John Lehman (D)
Senate District 5	Jim Sullivan (D)	Senate District 23	Patrick Kreitlow (D)
Senate District 7	Jeffrey Plale (D)	Senate District 25	Robert Jauch (D)
Senate District 9	Jamie Aulik (D)	Senate District 27	Jon Erpenbach (D)
Senate District 11	L.D. Rockwell (D)	Senate District 29	Russ Decker (D)
Senate District 13	No screening, NR	Senate District 31	Kathleen Vinehout (D)
Senate District 15	Judy Robson (D)	Senate District 33	Uncontested
Senate District 17	Dale Schultz (R)		

State Assembly

<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
1	Ame Grail (D)	16	Leon Young (D)
2	No screening, No Recommendation	17	Barbara Toles (D)
3	Ron Gruett (D)	18	Tamara Grigsby (D)
4	Rich Langan (D)	19	Jon Richards (D)
5	Tom Nelson (D)	20	Christine Sinicki (D)
6	Richard Lieftring (D)	21	No screening, No recommendation
7	Peggy Krusick (D)	22	Sheldon Wasserman (D)
8	Pedro Colon (D)	23	Stanley Teplin (D)
9	Josh Zepnick (D)	24	Candidates declined screening
10	Polly Williams (D)	25	No recommendation
11	No recommendation	26	Terry Van Akkeren (D)
12	Fred Kessler (D)	27	No recommendation
13	David Cullen (D)	28	Ann Hraychuck (D)
14	Dave Hucke (D)	29	Kerry Kittel (D)
15	Tony Staskunas (D)	30	Dan Gorman (D)

31	No recommendation	66	No screening, No recommendation
32	Ryan Schroeder (D)	67	Roberta Rasmus (D)
33	No recommendation	68	Michael Turner (D)
34	Paul Tubbs (D)	69	Timothy Swiggum (D)
35	No screening, No recommendation	70	Amy Sue Vruwink (D)
36	Kelly Parrson (D)	71	Louis Molepske (D)
37	Andy Jorgensen (D)	72	Marlin Schneider (D)
38	Dwayne Block (D)	73	Frank Boyle (D)
39	No screening, No recommendation	74	Gary Sherman (D)
40	No Recommendation	75	Mary Hubler (D)
41	Joan Ballweg (R)	76	Terese Berceau (D)
42	Tim Henney (D)	77	Spencer Black (D)
43	Kim Hixson (D)	78	Mark Pocan (D)
44	Mike Sheridan (D)	79	Sondy Pope-Roberts (D)
45	Chuck Benedict (D)	80	Janis Ringhand (D)
46	Gary Hebl (D)	81	David Travis (D)
47	Megan Yost (D)	82	No screening, No recommendation
48	Joe Parisi (D)	83	Donald Herron (D)
49	Phil Garthwaite (D)	84	No screening, No recommendation
50	Will Buros (D)	85	Donna Seidel (D)
51	No recommendation	86	Gary Adams (D)
52	No recommendation	87	Dewey Floberg (D)
53	No recommendation	88	James Soletski (D)
54	Gordon Hintz (D)	89	Randy Koehn (D)
55	Mark Westphal (D)	90	Gary Froseth (D)
56	Susan Garcia Franz (D)	91	Barbara Gronemus (D)
57	Penny Bernard Schaber (D)	92	No recommendation
58	No screening, No recommendation	93	Jeff Smith (D)
59	No screening, No recommendation	94	James Kinsman (D)
60	No screening, No recommendation	95	Jennifer Shilling (D)
61	Robert Turner (D)	96	Gail Frie (D)
62	Cory Mason (D)	97	Steve Schmuki (D)
63	Timothy Daley (D)	98	Sterling Lynk (D)
64	Jim Kreuser (D)	99	No screening, No recommendation
65	John Steinbrink (D)		

USU, WEAC AND OTHER UNIONS OPPOSE MARRIAGE AMENDMENT

The USU and WEAC are among hundreds of unions, civic organizations, faith groups, community leaders and others that have come out against the proposed constitutional amendment that would deny marriage rights to gays, foreclose the possibility of civil unions, and threaten domestic partner privileges.

The amendment will state: "Only a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in this state. A legal status identical or substantially similar to that of marriage for unmarried individuals shall not be valid or recognized in this state."

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The USU and WEAC opposes this amendment to the Wisconsin Constitution because it would ban civil unions, duplicate legislative language on marriage, invalidate collective bargaining agreements, and enshrine discriminatory practices in our Constitution.

The USU and WEAC both see the impact this will have on the people we represent and serve. If this amendment passes, even members of the opposite sex living together will be impacted. Contracts that extend health care benefits to identified domestic partners and provide sick leave and bereavement leave to care for or mourn the loss of a domestic partner could be voided. In states that have passed similar bans, domestic partner benefits negotiated by labor unions are being challenged in court. The Michigan Attorney General issued a memo calling on local government employers not to renew existing domestic partner benefits. It will apply to partner families that are heterosexual as well as committed gay and lesbian families.

Other unions that have gone on record opposing the ban include AFT Wisconsin, AFL-CIO Wisconsin, AFSCME Council 24 Local 2748, the Council of Labor Union Women, Madison Teachers Inc., the Middleton Education Association, the Stevens Point Area Education Association, Milwaukee County Labor Council, and United Faculty and Academic Staff. This is just a partial list.

A MOTHER'S PERSPECTIVE

This letter appeared in several local newspapers including the La Crosse Tribune and the Eau Claire Leader Telegram.

Much is being written about the proposed marriage amendment to the state constitution. This amendment will not legalize gay marriage, protect heterosexual marriage, or "straighten out" gay people. It is based on irrational fears and beliefs that I will never understand. What it WILL do is hurt both gay and straight couples--and Wisconsin's reputation as a pioneering and progressive state.

I look at this amendment from the perspective of a mother. I have two wonderful daughters, and if either were gay, I wouldn't love them any less. My main concern would be the prejudice and intolerance that they would face because of it; to legitimize this discrimination with an amendment to the state constitution would be outrageous!

I have heard proponents of the amendment say that it will "protect the children." I ask HOW? Every gay person who would be hurt by this is someone's child. Every child of gay parents would experience the same hurt. Growing up in today's world is hard enough without having your government tell you that you don't deserve to be treated like everyone else.

Our soldiers are dying overseas to protect the freedoms of ALL Americans. How can Wisconsin minimize their sacrifice by voting to deny freedoms to thousands of its citizens?

Please vote NO on Nov. 7th.

"America did not invent human rights. In a very real sense, human rights invented America"

President Jimmy Carter

"Many of the values embedded in the labor movement's search for social justice reflect our own faith values."

Cardinal Roger M. Mahoney, speaking as chairman of the U.S. Catholic Conference's Domestic Policy Committee, 8/27/1999



START YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE NEXT ELECTION CYCLE NOW



"The purpose of government is to counteract the moneyed interests."

Thomas Jefferson

"There's a direct relationship between the ballot box and the bread box, and what the union fights for and wins at the bargaining table can be taken away in the legislative halls."

Walter Reuther

"We must be partisan for a principle and not a party."

Samuel Gompers



Now is a great time to set up a process to be able to contribute personally to political candidates, committees, or parties at the state and local level in the next elections cycle.

The USU has a Direct Givers Program. Participation in this program is totally voluntary and you are under no obligation to make deposits or contributions if you do not want to. You may from time to time get suggestions that you make personal contributions to specific candidates, committees or parties; but no contribution will be made unless you authorize such a contribution in writing. You need not give any contribution to the recommended candidates, committees, or parties and you may give to those candidates, committees, or parties who are not recommended. You may also, at any time, request that some or all of your USU DGP money deposited in your account be returned to you.

If you would like to participate, you may make regular payments of at least \$2.00 per paycheck through your payroll deductions by requesting a payroll deduction form from Jim Blank, the account administrator. The money you deposit each pay period will be credited in your name to a separate and segregated account managed by the USU DGP account administrator. Periodically, or upon request, you will be notified of the amount of money you have deposited, the amount you have already donated, and the amount still available for your use. You may also participate by making occasional direct deposits by check to the USU DGP through the account administrator.

If, at any time, you wish to make a contribution for any political purpose, simply fill out an authorization form which will be provided to you by the USU DGP or e-mail Jim Blank at blankj@weac.org the amount you want to contribute and to what candidate, committee, or party the money should be sent. A check will then be mailed or delivered directly to the candidate, committee, or party of your choice with information identifying you and your contribution.

If you have any questions regarding this program and/or are interested in participating through payroll deductions, please call Jim Blank at 1-800-472-5582. You could also ask some of your colleagues because chances are they are already involved as well. Additionally, plans are being made to put the USU DGP forms on the USU webpage as well.

Final words on the so called Marriage Amendment Act: The amendment could negatively affect you or someone you know even if you or they are heterosexual. If you or they are in a solid relationship but are unmarried, you or they could lose legal protections and benefits that you currently enjoy.

The ban could have dangerous and unintended consequences. Similar amendments in other states caused many problems that were not considered before they were approved.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

This is to provide you with information on opportunities to help with get out the vote activities in Green Bay, Racine, Eau Claire, the Milwaukee area and Appleton in the days leading up to the November 7 election. If you are available and willing to travel to one of these

We need hundreds of volunteers to hit the streets and remind voters to go to the polls. For four days, volunteers will be knocking on doors or putting door hangers on doors to remind voters to vote.

DATES: November 4 -7

PROJECT: Door to Door Literature Drop to mobilize voters

TO SIGN UP: Visit www.gotvwisconsin.org <<http://www.gotvwisconsin.org/>>

AMERICA VOTES STAGING LOCATIONS:

GREEN BAY	Bayland United Northeast Educators 1136 N. Military Avenue, Green Bay (Limited Paid Opportunity through SEIU - \$10/hour)
RACINE	Racine Education Association, 1201 West Blvd., Racine
EAU CLAIRE/ CHIPPEWA FALLS	WEAC/Eau Claire Association of Educators Office, 2004 Highland Avenue, Eau Claire
WEST SIDE OF MILWAUKEE	Wisconsin Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals, 9620 West Greenfield Avenue, Brewery Workers Local 9 Conference Room, West Allis
EAST SIDE OF MILWAUKEE	North Shore Presbyterian, 4048 N. Bartlett Avenue, Milwaukee Planned Parenthood Office, 302 N. Jackson Street, Milwaukee
APPLETON	WEAC Fox Valley Office, 921 West Associate Drive, Appleton (Limited Paid Opportunity through SEIU - \$10/hour)

OPPOSITION TO MARRIAGE AMENDMENT

For volunteer opportunities visit www.fairwisconsin.org

"Increased interest and participation by labor in the affairs of government should make for economic and political stability in the future. Labor has a constitutional and statutory right to participate."

John L. Lewis

"The labor movement's political activity is aimed at encouraging the greatest participation in elections. Democracy cannot succeed if only the rich and powerful have and use the votes."

George Meany, 1978