



NEWSLETTER

Volume 28, No. 3

Janet Nortrom, Editor

December 12, 2003

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I want to wish all of you a very happy holiday season. Whether you celebrate X-mas, Hanukah, Kwanzaa or Ramadan, this is one time of the year when the values of peace (on earth) and goodwill (among men and women) are given equal time with the goals of material acquisition and profit making.

It's too bad that the MATC administration doesn't practice these universal holiday values. It has declared war on its frontline educators, attempting to cut salaries, retiree health benefits for new employees and earning opportunities, while publicly attacking us. The solidarity demonstrated by MATC's represented employees in the face of these unwarranted attacks has reflected the true holiday spirit, goodwill and brotherhood among all men and women. Thanks for all of your efforts and support this semester.

This has been a very trying year for all of us who are committed to this college and the students that we serve. MATC and public institutions in general are under attack from self-serving legislators who offer simplistic tax freeze/cut solutions to complex problems. They seem to have forgotten the holiday dictum that it is better to give than to receive?

Incidentally, anyone who thinks a tax freeze is viable should look at California where the nation's first property tax freeze, proposition 13, was enacted in the late 1970's. At the time California's educational system was the envy of the nation. Standardized test scores were among the highest and every high school graduate was guaranteed a college education. Community college tuition was free. By drastically limiting the property tax and locking in low taxes for property owners as long as they didn't move, Proposition 13 paralyzed government and education and actually worsened tax inequities.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT CONTINUED

New homeowners in small bungalows often pay higher property taxes than millionaires who've lived in their mansions for three decades. Proposition 13 also froze the educational system's principle source of revenue, the property tax. Today California's public schools have huge pupil-teacher ratios, are facing millions of dollars in deferred maintenance and have among the lowest achievement rates in the country. This is the fruit of California's ill-conceived property tax freeze!

The passage of Proposition 13 set California on a long slide, from the state with the best public schools, community colleges, highway systems and public health clinics, to the one with the worst. In the 1950s and 1960s, California was a showcase of public services. By the 1990s, thanks to Proposition 13, it ranked with Mississippi.

Wisconsin does have a tax fairness problem. Over the past 15 years the state has dramatically shifted the tax burden from profitable corporations and high-income earners to working families and the middle class. The richest taxpayers in Wisconsin, with average incomes of 770,000, pay 5.9% of their income in taxes while middle-income families, earning between \$30,000 and \$48,000, pay 11.3% and the poor pay 10%. Corporate taxes have plummeted from 11.3% of revenues in 1979 to only 3.9% today. Wisconsin ranks 30th out of 45 states in corporate tax contributions. Two-thirds of Wisconsin businesses in 2003 reported no income and paid no taxes.

The citizens of Wisconsin and other states need public institutions because the private market system doesn't meet all of our needs, for education and retraining, national security, recreation, public health, etc. Taxes pay for these things. As Justice Holmes said "taxes are what we pay for a civilized society."

The question is what is the fairest way to pay for these public services? My answer is that those who have the greatest ability to contribute, who benefit the most, should contribute the most.

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Those who are working low wage jobs or our retirees on fixed incomes, struggling to make ends meet, should bear a much smaller burden. To put it simply we need to restore progressivity to our tax system.

In Wisconsin that means three things:

- 1) Profitable corporations should pay their fair share. Today that is not the case. Eleven of our 15 largest banks pay no corporate taxes. Forward Wisconsin on its web site brags that business taxes in Wisconsin are among the lowest in nation. Why would anyone brag about being a scofflaw?
- 2) It means that the many of the corporate tax exemptions which cost the state over \$1 billion annually, particularly those that do not create jobs, should be repealed.
- 3) It means that we should restore progressivity to the state's income tax. The top marginal rate is currently the lowest it has been in almost 75 years, while the low rate is close to the highest. If we simply returned to the rate of 1999, according to the LAB, we would generate an additional \$1 billion in tax revenue.

One of the holiday season themes I like best is that it is better to give than to receive. This sentiment, however, should not be limited to the five weeks between Thanksgiving and X-mas. If it is truly better to give than receive, than Wisconsin's corporations and high-income individuals should be willing to pay their fair share. That would give me some real and long lasting holiday cheer.

Happy Holidays and thank all of you for your tireless efforts on behalf of our students and for the support you have given to the leadership of local 212. While there are too many of you for me to thank by name, I truly appreciate your efforts and wish you and your families a happy and peaceful holiday.

MICHAEL ROSEN, PRESIDENT



Seasons Greetings
The Executive Board and
Staff of Local 212 wish
everyone a safe and
peaceful holiday season!

PARKING IN THE UNION LOT

This is a reminder to our members that they should only park in the Union lot when they have union business to attend. When you do park in the lot be sure to let the office staff know that you are there and give an estimated time of your return. We have a number of cars that have parked without letting us know. In fairness to all members, we need to reserve the few spots we have for those participating in union meetings or activities. Because we are unable to check whether the car belongs to a union member, you risk being ticketed. So, identify yourself and provide your reason for parking there to the staff. Also, only those with handicap license plates or hang tags are allowed to park in the handicapped parking space. The police will ticket anyone who is not authorized to park in a handicap parking space. Thank you for your cooperation and have a great winter break!

**MARLENE DOMBROWSKI,
 EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT**

WHAT MAKES A UNION STRONGER?

There are various ingredients necessary to make a Union stronger. Three of them are:

1. Direct involvement and support from its members.
2. Strong Union Leadership.
3. Administration Leadership that works to divide, undermine, disrespect employees and destroy trust.

Since this spring I have seen an increase in member involvement and witnessed impressive leadership examples from Local 212 leadership and Executive Board. Items 1 and 2 are there to continue the momentum toward a stronger Union.

As for the third item needed, being on the bargaining committee I have witnessed proposals that work to divide, undermine, disrespect and destroy trust. The author of such proposals is somewhat cloudy though not a total mystery.

If bargaining in 2003 is any indicator of the future relationship between Local 212 and MATC Administration there will be problems. I urge everyone to be active in our Union especially anyone who plans to be at this school for 10 or more years. Be an active part of the solution to a strong Union. Resist the kind of disrespect and disillusionment experienced by numerous educators in 'Right-To-Work' states.

**DAVID STINNETT,
 BARGAINING COMMITTEE MEMBER**

CONGRATUATIONS TO ANOTHER LOCAL 212 FACULTY MEMBER

I am happy to announce that another Local 212 faculty member has achieved an educational milestone. Akram Dakwar was awarded an Ed.D. in May 2003 from Cardinal Stritch University. His doctorate degree is in "Leadership, Learning and Services". Akram is an outstanding Math instructor from the liberal arts division currently teaching at the South campus. He has been employed at MATC for the past 17 years. We recognize and applaud Akram on achieving his personal goal. His pursuit of this degree again demonstrates the outstanding commitment of our faculty to strive for educational excellence.

KATHY TOMCZYK BORN, SUNSHINE CHAIR

GOV DOYLE ADDRESSES SOCIAL SOLIDARITY EVENT

At our well-attended October 22nd Social Solidarity Event, Local 212 honored Governor Jim Doyle for making education one of his top priorities.

In his address to the gathering, Governor Doyle spoke about the two years he and his wife had spent in the Peace Corps in the 1960s in Tunisia, North Africa. That experience convinced him of the importance of education in society. He spoke of the warmth and generosity of Middle Eastern hospitality. He lived with people who had nothing but gave him everything. The people struggled to send their children to school, and today, virtually 100 per cent of people in Tunisia are literate.

Citing statistics released the day before, which ranked Wisconsin teachers as the best-educated in the country, he pledged that he would not let education be ripped apart in our state. He pointed out that technical colleges are the ones that do the bulk of the work in getting people into jobs. The key to economic growth is increasing wages, he reminded us, so the fight to increase the minimum wage is a top priority. We need to work to get people who are in low-skilled jobs into high-skilled jobs, and from temporary jobs into permanent ones.

Governor Doyle announced that he had appointed long-time Hispanic activist, Ernesto Chacon, as the new deputy director of the governor's office in Milwaukee. Chacon was present at the event. State Senator Spencer Coggs, who had recently been elected senator in the 6th state senate district, also spoke at the event, and acknowledged the support of unions that had helped him get elected.

ALEXANDRA TOPPING AND SUE RUGGLES

EXPLORE AMERICA'S SOUTHWEST MAY 29 TO JUNE 12, 2004

MATC's most popular **Natural Science Field Studies** course ("America's Southwest") will be offered for the first time in two years **from May 29 to June 12, 2004**. This extraordinary 15-day field course is ideal for students who would like to earn four science credits while participating in an unforgettable learning adventure in some of America's most spectacular national parks and monuments (including Bryce, Zion, Grand Canyon and Arches).



ARCHES NATIONAL PARK OPENS WINDOWS TO THE WONDERS OF NATURE!

Natural Science Field Studies 1 ("America's Southwest," NATSCI-282, 4 credits) satisfies the requirement of a lab science in MATC's Associate degree programs. It can also be taken for undergraduate or graduate credit through Mount Mary College and can be transferred to other two-year and four-year colleges. Financial aid is available. Please advise MATC students and all potential participants of this unique opportunity. See posted flyers and check the course website at:

<http://oncampus.matc.edu/fieldtrips/southwest> for more information, or contact Bob Helwig at 297-7428 (helwigj@matc.edu), Wayne Schlipp at 297-7440 (schlippw@gwise1.matc.edu), or George Stone at 297-7430 (stoneg@matc.edu).

GEORGE STONE, INSTRUCTOR

NOTICE ON MOTION TO REDUCE DUES RATES

On December 11, 2003, immediately before the Local 212 Open House, a General Membership Meeting will be held. At that meeting, a motion will be presented to amend the budget passed for this year to reduce the percentage charged for dues from 1.1% to 1.0%.

Attendance at the meeting thus produces a double benefit: free food and drinks at the open house and more money in your pocket with the reduction in dues rates.

JIM BENEDEM, 2ND V.P. - BUDGET

PART-TIME PARAPROFESSIONALS UPDATE

As the new semester gets underway those who were voluntarily displaced because of the administration not following the contract will have an opportunity to exercise their bumping rights according to seniority. What's going on at the bargaining table is no less than a disgrace. Have a great holiday.

**JOSIANE SCHNOOK,
7TH V.P. - PART-TIME PROFESSIONALS**

CALLED TO ACTIVE DUTY

Mechanical Design Instructor, Aimee Davis, has been called to Active Duty. Davis has been a member of the Army Reserve for 6 years as a carpentry and masonry specialist. The length and the location of her duty have not yet been determined. Amy was scheduled to leave on November 30th for Texas and officially mobilized on December 7th.

FROM THE EDITOR

A special thank you again to Linda Winkelman for all the great help she provides with hospitality for the Local 212 delegates at each state WFT convention. She and Pam Bautch were tireless and creative and we thank them both. Peace and joy to all our members during this holiday season, share it with others.

JANET NORTROM, EDITOR



LOCAL 212 WEB SITE

<http://www.local212.org>

Education Loans for Union Members

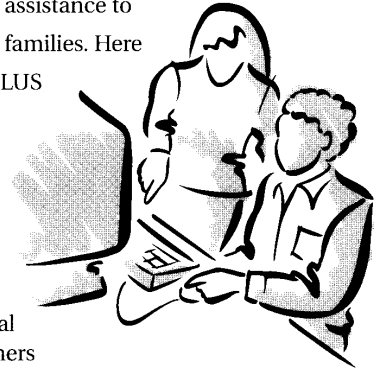
AFT PLUS and Sallie Mae have partnered to provide educational assistance to union members and their families. Here are just a few of the AFT PLUS Education Loan Services features:

- financial aid counseling via a dedicated toll-free phone line
- college education loans from a network of federal and private lender partners
- "Paying for College" seminars

Call for more information:

1-877-881-1022

www.aftplus.org



12/03

CONDOLENCES TO . . .

Jane Powell, Radiologic Technology Instructor, whose mother-in-law passed away last weekend.

Kathy Bates, Environmental Health Instructor, on the recent passing of her mother.

The family and friends of **Robert Rice**, retired History instructor, who passed away Sunday, November 30th at the age of 73.

Francisco Urbina, Adult High School Instructor, whose mother passed away in November.

Richard Boldt, Adult High School Instructor, on the passing of his mother-in-law in November.

Marwill Santiago, Graphic Arts Educational Assistant, whose father passed away in October.

Mark Saxon, Photography Instructor, on the death of his father in October.

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