



LEA *Express*

February 8, 2008

A weekly compilation of Association news, minutes, upcoming events and tips for LEA Members.

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LEA Elections



Your Voice Needs to Be Heard

LEA is allowed 45 delegate positions for the NSEA Delegate Assembly being held April 25 and 26 at the Cornhusker Marriott, here in Lincoln. In order to have full representation and the voices of LEA to be heard, would you consider running for one of the positions? The process is easy. Click on this site to complete the nomination form. <http://www.lincolneducationassociation.org/>

If you have not participated in Delegate Assembly, it is worth your effort for this opportunity. The commitment is short, yet you will learn a great deal about how the Association functions. After the experience, you will come away with some awe and a better understanding of all the Association does with your dues dollars. You will be the voice of your colleagues as you make decisions regarding the operation of your Association. If you have been a delegate in the past, the LEA needs you to make your voice heard.

The commitments of a delegate for the Delegate Assembly are:

- 1) April 14, 6 p.m.--A pre-delegate assembly caucus at Yankee Hill Country Club (dinner is provided)
- 2) April 25--The first sessions of Delegate Assembly beginning at 7:00 pm and concluding about 9:00 pm. (Parking is provided)
- 3) April 26--The final sessions from 7:30 am until conclusion (about 3 p.m.). (Parking and lunch are provided)

Please consider submitting your name for nomination. The electronic deadline is February 14. Again here is the website:

<http://www.lincolneducationassociation.org/>

Names will be taken from the floor at the February 21 FR Council.

Please consider this short-term opportunity to make a difference in the long-term.

LEA Tidbits



- ✓ I Can Do It Rescheduled!
- ✓ Works 4 Me
- ✓ Act Soon to Get Your Free Generics from BCBS
- ✓ NEA's New Partnership a Real 'GEM'
- ✓ Your Retirement Plan Offers A Pair of Little-Known Benefits
- ✓ Subscribe to bNetS@vvy and Keep Youth Safe
- ✓ Bright Lights Needs Summer Classroom Assistants
- ✓ Part-Time ACT/SAT Exam Prep Math, Science, English & Reading Instructors Needed
- ✓ NEA A+ Auto: Insurance Institute Names Top Picks for Safest Cars

"I Can Do It" has been rescheduled

Because of the snow storm on January 6, The "I Can Do It" classroom management class has been rescheduled to February 27, 4:15 pm to 7:45 pm at the LEA Office, 4920 Normal Blvd.

You can register for the class at

<http://www.solutionwhere.com/staffdevlps/cw/showcoursesbymonth.asp>

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### **Works 4 Me**

Take a look at the classroom tips that are available to LEA members

<http://em.mansellgroup.net/nea/works4me/w4m080205.html>

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Act Soon to Get Your Free Generics from BCBS

Time is running out on the free generic prescription drug offer from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska. Until March 31, prescriptions filled with a generic drug will be free for eligible Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska members.

Generics can save you money, even after March 31. The average cost of a 30-day supply of a generic prescription drug is \$22, compared to an average of \$123 for brand name drugs.

It's easy to take advantage of the free offer. If you're already taking a generic prescription drug, whenever you get a refill using either a participating Rx Nebraska retail pharmacy or PrimeMail mail service program, your copay/coinsurance amount will be waived. If you're currently taking a brand name drug, ask your doctor if a generic drug is available and appropriate to treat your

condition, and if so, to write you a new prescription. Have the new prescription filled at a participating pharmacy or through PrimeMail, and the normal copay/coinsurance will be waived. It's that easy!

Note that persons who are 65 years old or older, and who are in a Medicare, Medicare Supplement or Medicare Part D plan, are not eligible. Only those who participate in the Educator's Health Alliance Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska Plan are eligible.

For details, visit this Web site: www.genericsfromneblues.com

NEA's New Partnership a Real 'GEM'

NEA has become a partner with the Gateway to Educational Materials (GEM) Exchange, supporting the Gateway to 21st Century Skills Web site and offering NEA members scores of education resources.

The GEM Web site combines state-of-the-art search technologies and a complete database of state academic standards for core subjects. The Gateway offers links to resources that NEA members need to make learning meaningful and fun for their students.

Some of the many benefits members can expect to receive from a visit to the Gateway:

—Access to thousands of quality learning resources through the latest in faceted search technology.

—Reinforcement of core content with learning resources from NASA, PBS, the National Science Foundation and more than 700 other contributing education content providers.

—Access to the Achievement Standards Network, a digitized version of every state's core academic standards.

For details, visit the Web site at: <http://www.thegateway.org>

Your Retirement Plan Offers A Pair of Little-Known Benefits

Active teachers may think that their retirement funds are available only when they retire. The Nebraska Public Employee Retirement System (NPERS) also offers a pre-retirement death benefit and an in-service disability benefit.

Also not widely known: when the use of such benefits don't fit member needs, NSEA and NSEA-Retired step in to push for change. Two years ago, when an NSEA member died unexpectedly, the surviving spouse missed the then-120 day filing period for death benefits by two days.

Thanks to NSEA and NSEA-Retired, that death benefit filing deadline has now been extended to 12 months after the date of death. LB508 extended the filing deadline, and was introduced by Dist. 31 State Sen. Rich Pahls of Omaha at the request of NSEA and NSEA-Retired. The bill was signed by Gov. Dave Heineman, and became law last year.

Death Benefit Aspect

Under the NPERS system, when an active school employee dies, the school

district or the family of the employee should notify NPERS as quickly as possible so that necessary forms may be sent to survivors. If the employee was married and had named his or her spouse as the sole primary beneficiary, the surviving spouse can elect to receive either a lifetime income or a refund of the accumulated contributions, plus interest.

To receive a lifetime income, the surviving spouse must make application within 12 months of the death of the employee. For school employees with more than 10 years of service credit, the lifetime income will provide far more financial security than the refund.

If the employee did not name his or her spouse as the sole primary beneficiary, and instead named several individuals, a trust or an estate as the beneficiary, the settlement will be a lump-sum of the accumulated contributions, plus interest.

Disability Benefit

The second benefit, disability retirement, will provide a lifetime income to any school employee who becomes disabled while working. If the disability is work-related, application for disability retirement must be made within five years of the date that employment ends. If the disability is not work-related, application must be made within 12 months of end of employment.

The disability retirement benefit is not a long-term-disability insurance policy, but will help to replace some income should the employee become disabled while working for a school district.

Subscribe to bNetS@vvy and Keep Youth Safe

By middle school, most students are online and using wireless phones — and many adults are wondering how to make sure these technologies help, rather than hinder, kids' safety and learning.

Offered by the NEA Health Information Network, bNetS@vvy is an electronic newsletter that is packed with first-hand stories, strategies, and tools to help teachers, tech coaches, parents and guardians engage and help youth ages 9 to 14 to stay safer online.

bNetS@vvy is published in partnership with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and Sprint's Project Connect.

To subscribe, visit the NEA HIN Web site at: <http://www.neahin.org/>



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 1, 2008

Contact: Barb Highstreet (402) 420-1115 ext. 45

Title of Press Release: Teachers Wanted

Bright Lights Needs Summer Classroom Assistants

Within five years of entering the classroom, more than half of young teachers leave for other jobs. With thousands of current Nebraska teachers nearing retirement, that doesn't bode well for the teaching profession.

High School Students Encouraged to be Teachers: But Bright Lights, a Lincoln-area summer enrichment program for elementary and middle school students, offers an opportunity to fill this void by giving hands-on teaching experience to volunteers in high school. Each summer, Bright Lights recruits more than 200 students to serve as classroom assistants. Students apply on line between February 15 and March 5 and will volunteer for 20 hours in the summer. Most classes will be held at Lincoln's Randolph Elementary School, at 37th and D streets. The 2008 program will be held during the weeks of June 9, June 23, and July 7. The assistant serves as a role model, and has the opportunity to work beside extraordinary teachers.

Students, who are interested in Japan, might want to volunteer for the program at Lux where 10 classes focus on half American and half Japanese students. At SWHS, Japanese is taught and may have special interest for students. In particular demand, are male and minority assistants.

Grade School Students Encouraged to be Teachers: To encourage younger children to develop an interest in teaching, Bright Lights also offers a class for students titled, "Teachers Wanted!" for post-fourth and fifth grade students. *Carmen Westfahl, teacher at Riley Elementary, has developed the class.*



Part-Time ACT/SAT Exam Prep Math, Science, English & Reading Instructors Needed

Instructors are expected to provide a minimum of 4 hours per week instruction. A four year college degree is required. Very strong high school math and English backgrounds are required.

Exam prep is provided to students after school and on Saturdays. Instructors will work in a stable and structured work environment and must be energetic and motivated to help students get the best score possible. Our exam prep instructors work on a one-to-one basis, thereby helping students achieve tremendous progress in a relatively short period of time. As our students improve skills, they improve their confidence and motivation and see exam scores increase dramatically.

Visit our national website at www.huntingtonlearningcenter.com to learn more about Huntington Learning Center.

Please send your resume to Huntington Learning Center, 2801 Pine Lake Rd.,

Suite H, Lincoln, NE, 68516 or email a copy to hlclincoln@windstream.net

EOE



Kristen Smith, Field Representative
E-Mail: kksmith@aplus.com
Home Office: 402-991-6811
Toll Free V-Mail: 800-964-3903 ext. 5991
To receive a Quote: 877-777-1419

Insurance Institute Names Top Picks for Safest Cars

If you're in the market for a new car, you may want to check out the list that names the safest models, as defined by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS). For the 2008 model year, 34 vehicles earned the IIHS' top honors, based on their ability to protect people in front, side and rear crashes as rated in the Institute's tests. Winners also had to be equipped with Electronic Stability Control (ESC), which research has shown to significantly reduce the risk of crashing. This is a new criteria for 2008.

The list of 2008's 34 top performers more than doubles the number of vehicles that met the criteria in 2007. The IIHS says this is a result of manufacturers making changes to their vehicular designs to enhance safety. Last year, only 13 models qualified but, throughout the model year, manufacturers made design changes to 10 additional models to increase their crash-worthiness. They also introduced safer designs in some mid-year releases.

"For 2008, consumers have the widest selection of vehicles they've ever had that afford the best protection in the most common kinds of crashes," noted Institute President Adrian Lund. Front and side impacts are the most common kinds of fatal crashes, killing nearly 25,000 of the 31,000 vehicle occupants who died in 2005, the IIHS noted.

To see which cars made the list, go to the IIHS Web site, at www.iihs.org.

"I enjoy having my insurance through A+ Insurance. Their rates are competitive and less than other companies. I have only had one rate increase in the last 5 years. They are helpful when you call with questions. I don't ever plan on changing companies."

Wendy Adams, Woodland Elementary, Edwardsville SD

If you have additional questions concerning your vehicle or would like to receive a free no-obligation quote, please give us a call at **1-877-777-1419**. This is a message provided by the A+ NEA Members Auto & Home Insurance Program.

Calendar of Events



Click on the following link for the LEA Calendar of Events ...

<http://www.lincolneducationassociation.org/calendarofevents.html>