



GS Bulletin board

November 14, 2008

Internal Weekly Announcements
for Grant Wood Area Education
Agency Staff and Board

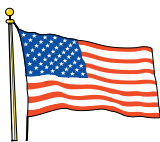
Mark Your Calendars

- Nov. 18** GWAEA Board Meeting
5:30 p.m./33rd Avenue
- Nov. 26** Agency closes at 3 p.m.
- Nov. 27** Thanksgiving Holiday
- Nov. 28** Agency closed
- Dec. 3** PRIME Benefit Systems
Employee Info. Meeting
4:00 p.m., Room 221, 33rd Ave.
- Dec. 8** Flexible Spending Plan Election
Forms for Year 2009 due into the
Business Office
- Dec. 10** Agency Potluck-Coralville Facility
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- Dec. 17** Agency Breakfast Potluck
33rd Avenue, 8:30-10:30 a.m.

Announcements

•Attached you will find:

- ~Vacancies
- ~EAP Frontline Employee Newsletter



It's Winter!

The Weather Bureau issues the following warnings when there is an impending winter storm:

Travelers Advisory: Issued when ice and snow are expected to hinder travel.

Winter Storm Watch: Severe winter weather is possible.

Winter Storm Warning: Heavy snow, sleet, or freezing rain is expected.

Blizzard Warning: Heavy snow and winds in excess of 35 miles per hour are expected.

Severe Blizzard Warning: Heavy snow, winds over 45 miles per hour, and temperatures below 10 degrees are expected.

Preparation/Prevention



Since many staff travel a great deal, it is advised to keep the following items in their cars in preparation for winter: windshield scraper, flashlight with fresh batteries, tow chain or rope, shovel, tire chains, blanket, bag of sand or salt, a colorful distress flag and an emergency flare. It is also good to keep extra gloves, hats and outerwear in the car.

•Dress for winter travel:

1. Many layers of clothing are warmer than single layers of clothing.
2. Mittens are warmer than gloves.
3. Wear a hat. Most body heat is lost through the top of the head.
4. Cover your mouth with scarves to protect lungs from directly inhaling extremely cold air.

•Keep cars "winterized" with antifreeze and tires with good treads.

School or Agency Closings

When severe winter weather comes, staff are urged to make the decision whether or not to go to their assigned work site or leave work early, using the following criteria:

1. Is my school(s) closed?
2. Is there work I could be doing at my agency center?
3. Is it endangering my safety for me to travel?

The Master Contract requires voice-mail notification to staff if an Agency Center

(Continued on next page)

(It's Winter-Continued)

closes due to an emergency. If the decision is made to close one or more of the Agency Centers, the communications office will contact the news media (KHAK, WMT, KGAN-TV and KCRG-TV), place information on the agency Web site and release a staff all-call message. Staff will be informed regarding (a) which centers are affected, (b) when the center(s) will close, (c) when the agency anticipates reopening the center(s), and (d) when the next employee update will be available.

•If a staff member decides to remain at home or the agency announces closure of an Agency Center, employees scheduled to work during that time will be required to make up the work time missed while the Agency Center was closed or while they remained at home during work hours. Options for making up the work time include:

1. calendar change,
2. emergency leave,
3. personal leave,
4. leave without pay or
5. as otherwise specified in the Master Contract (Article 7 for Classified Staff, Article 8 for Contracted Staff) or terms of employment.

•In the event an employee performs assigned or approved work during a closing, the amount of time spent performing such services is recognized and considered as work time.

•Whether a staff member has an office in an Agency Center or in their home, staff members may see a need to work from home for all or part of a work day when their scheduled building closes, in which case the staff member is to provide advance notice of this schedule change to their supervisor and receive prior approval of the intent to work from home. This communication is in the best interest of all involved and provides clear understanding regarding time worked. (As a general rule, hourly staff are not authorized to work from home.)

The efforts and leadership of staff in planning and providing for services that are missed due to school or Agency closings are important for ensuring quality services and are much appreciated.

Starlighters II
presents

GODSPELL

The musical celebration of humankind,
based on the gospel of Matthew

Dec. 5-7, 12-14
Call 319-462-4793 or go to
www.starlighters.org

Starlighters Theater in Anamosa

Professional Development Opportunities

- 11/17/08** CISM Group Crisis Intervention
- 11/18/08** A Review of IEP Documentation & Processes for AEA and LEA Staff
- 11/18/08** Working with Clip Art
- 11/24/08** Coping with Change in the Workplace
- 11/25/08** IEC Scholastic Iowa Tour
- 12/1/08** An Inside Look at Outlook
- 12/4/08** How to Get More Out of Your Core Reading Program
- 12/8/08** Schools Where Everyone Belongs
- 12/9/08** iLife 08 in the Classroom
- 12/9/08** Sexual Harassment
- 12/15/08** CISM Group Crisis Intervention
- 12/15/08** Fundamentals of Applied Behavior Analysis
- 12/16/08** Counselor Academy – “Building A Comprehensive School Counseling Program”

For location, more information, or to register, go to the Professional Development web page.

'Bowl For Kids' Sake' Needs Your Help!

Grant Wood AEA has participated in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters 'Bowl For Kids' Sake' fundraiser for many years.

We need someone to help coordinate this event. If you are interested and would like more information, contact Karen Michalec at Ext. 6415.

Chair Massage Schedule

Terri Nicol, a Licensed Massage Therapist, and former GWAEA employee, has been coming and doing chair massages for us.

Massages cost just \$10. Appointments will be made in 20 minute increments but your massage will be 15 minutes in length. Some staff may need to get approval from their supervisor to adjust their break times so they can participate.

33rd Avenue Facility

Thursday, November 20

Tuesday, December 8

Tuesday, December 15

The first appointment time is 9:40 a.m. and the last is at 1:40 p.m.

To schedule, contact Karen Michalec at kmichalec@gwaea.org or at Ext. 6415.



Blanket Drive

Blankets will be collected until Monday, December 22. The yellow collection box is located in the 33rd Avenue building at the West Entrance next to the stair well.

Blankets can be sent to Karen Michalec, Communications Office at 33rd Avenue.

Thank You...

Thank you to everyone for their thoughts, prayers, and cards on the death of my father.

Nancy Coffman

Congratulations!

•to **Donna Matthews, Child Support Specialist** who won a seven night, Carribean cruise on the Crown Princess from radio station 104.5!

From the Payroll / Benefits Desk . . .

We will soon get started on the re-enrollment process for the upcoming 2009 flexible spending plan year – IRS Section 125 pre-tax benefits!

- If you are currently enrolled in Grant Wood AEA's group insurance and are paying a portion of the cost by payroll withholding, it is a great way for the payroll deduction to become a non-taxable benefit.

- Flexible spending accounts allow employees to set aside a specific dollar amount, before taxes are calculated, for out-of-pocket medical expenses, dependent care costs, and premiums for individually issued private health and/or dental insurance.

Additional flex plan features include: 1.) eligible medical expenses expanded to include over-the-counter (non-prescription) drugs and medicines and 2.) direct deposit into your bank account for reimbursements.

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The following timeline has been set up for this enrollment process:

Nov. 14 – Employees will receive flexible spending plan materials with their paychecks.

Dec. 3 – An informational meeting for employees at 4:00 pm in Room 221, 33rd Avenue Facility. A representative from PRIME Benefit Systems will be available to explain flexible spending accounts and answer questions.

Dec. 8 – Election forms due from **ALL** employees.

Everyone must return their election forms even if you decide not to participate in year 2009. Thank you! ! !

Cathy Kearns, Compensation / Benefits
 Grant Wood AEA Business Services
 E-mail: ckearns@aea10.k12.ia.us
 Telephone: (319) 399-6706

Shop 'Til You Drop!

A Holiday Bazaar & Bake Sale
 Saturday, Nov. 22, 2008
 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
 Eastview Christian Church
 727 Collins Rd., NE
 Cedar Rapids

Proceeds to benefit the *Cedar Rapids Concert Chorale - Celebrate 50 years of Beautiful Voices.

***Kim Novotny, Team Leader, Media** is a member of the Cedar Rapids Concert Chorale.

You're Invited



GWAEA
 Coralville Facility
 Holiday Potluck
 Wednesday, Dec. 10
 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Stop by for a visit and lunch!



Bulletin Board is published and distributed weekly to all GWAEA staff and Board members.

Buy, Sell or Trade items will be run for 2 weeks. Staff wishing to submit items should do so by Wed. of the week they wish the item to be printed. Send to Karen Michalec, Editor.

When submitting news, please remember that agency staff work in a variety of locations, and it may take two weeks to reach them with printed material.

Please note: the **Bulletin Board** is posted on the agency's Web site. We recommend you use your office or voice mail phone number instead of your home telephone number for any items listed in this newsletter.

Grant Wood Area Education Agency extends equal opportunities in its employment practices, educational programs and services, and does not discriminate on the basis of color, gender, race, national origin, religion, creed, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, disability, veteran status or as otherwise prohibited by law. If you believe you or your child has been discriminated against or treated unjustly, please contact the Agency's Equity Coordinator, Maria Cashman, at 319-399-6647 or 1-800-332-8488 or TDD 319-399-6766, Grant Wood AEA, 4401 Sixth St SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404.



American Education Week

Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility

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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Open House Day Celebrate Open House and time for parents, families, and community members in your school.	Parents Day Take parents into the school for a behind-the-scenes look at their children's educational day.	Educative Support Professionals Day Celebrate the administrative, support, and other professionals who make possible the learning and growth of our students.	Educator for a Day Encourage community members to spend time in the classroom, school, or district to gain perspective on the challenges of teaching.	Substitute Educators Day Thank substitute educators for their hard work and dedication to our students.		
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	NOVEMBER 2008					

For more information, visit www.nea.org/ae

