



*Educators and more since 1942*  
*February/ March 2026 Newsletter*



# Nostalgia and memories of an old(er) man

As I sit here writing this newsletter I am tempted to be nostalgic about my time and service to this community and the EDFT/EFE. I am a lifer here. My parents moved to East Detroit in 1964. I started in kindergarten with Mrs. Schubel at Deerfield at age 4 and followed those years at Oakwood and then the High School, where I graduated in 1981. I was blessed to be a pretty good athlete and that created the opportunity to attend a

college of my choice , Albion College, to continue my football life and train as an educator. A major in History and English as well as a minor in journalism, as well as my certificate set me on the path to find a career that I have enjoyed every day of my life.

This district has been in my blood my entire life. I haven't lived up to every dream I had since I got here. I failed at being a Hall of Fame football coach, but had a great time trying for 30 years. I had the wonderful opportunity to advocate for girls sports and lead the track program as a Head Coach for more than 30 years. I had the great honor to coach six State Champions and several more all state athletes in both sports. I have been able to include my children in celebrations and team events throughout all of those years and hosted team parties at my home to celebrate our hard work and achievements.

Through all those events, being a Shamrock has been one of the primary identities which I have cherished. Only the honor of being a son, a husband and a father has been more important to who I am.

I graduated on a Saturday, applied to sub on Monday and started working on Tuesday in 1985. I started coaching the JV football team immediately during the summer months and got my first job teaching at DeLaSalle that fall. A year later I was engaged and working at East Detroit for \$13,350.

I was laid off and recalled five times. As I grew in experience and understanding of the union, the district and the government, I was drawn to get more involved. As tight as my schedule was, I ran for a HS building rep position, which I held for about ten years. Dara Knill asked me to join the negotiating team to prepare for the potential of running for president and I was excited to do so. My father had been a Teamster rep and my brother was a regional president of the UFCW so I felt comfortable with the idea of negotiating and working deeply with the union leadership.

My father always taught me to protect benefits. They are the things that made the drudgery of work life more tolerable. They make the sacrifice of the time away from your family to provide for them a reasonable exchange of interests. I have held that health insurance was paramount among those benefits. I have kept that as a key to my tenure as president and hope the union will continue that idea in my absence.

The Board of Education and its members have not always agreed with my view of the world. I've had my nose to nose arguments with a superintendent or two as well. I have learned that a more

nuanced approach to negotiating and advocating for us has led to a more satisfying end result. Over the years our benefits have saved my life on more than one occasion. In 1988 my first child was born with multiple defects that took her from us after 15 days and several surgeries. A hospital bill of a half a million dollars would have bankrupted my family. I paid \$99 for the ambulance trip from St John's to Children's hospital. The rest was covered.

More recently one of my boys needed significant surgery. It would have once again bankrupted our family. I paid my deductible and was able to provide the necessary care for my family. Time and time again as I have had challenges in my life, the life I wanted for myself and my family was supported by the people and the contracts this district and this Union have been able to provide for me. In return, I have done my best to give the kids my very best every day and to represent the Union and the district to the very best of my ability. There is a duty to represent this membership to demand the most lucrative deal we can, yet at the same time assure the district can operate to provide services to the community in a responsible way.

I have had to negotiate concessions to our way of life to secure that ability. I was not happy to do it, but I would do it again to maintain this work. The sacrifices we made allowed this community to provide an education to its families. We have struggled in the world of Schools of Choice, but we have survived.

I mention these things as a guidepost to those that follow my work here. I will likely be around in some capacity with the Macomb Federation, but you as a union will need to make your way in an increasingly hostile world toward public educators. Everyone wants to tell you how to do your job and hold you responsible for failing to overcome the obstacles they have placed before you.

You can not passively allow whomever sits at my desk to fix things or rally you in an emergency. You must become more active advocates for your own well being. You must coalesce as a group to advocate for one another. Many of you are not career educators, at least not yet. I hope you decide to become one. This is not a job. It is a profession. It is one that defines who you are, not what you are. At least it does if you do it right.

This is a great profession. This is a great place to work. It can be as good or as bad as you wish to make it. You don't have to agree with everyone in charge. You don't have to be a robot checking boxes. In fact, I encourage you to be anything but that. If you give to these kids with your heart, you will get back more than you can imagine. It is the one benefit the union can't negotiate for you, but it is the most important one to have. The union's job is to help you find your way, provide for your family and protect your back as you search for the career you deserve.

Go get it.

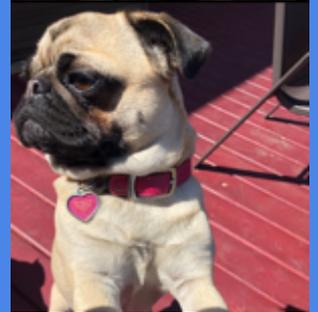
# Thereza bone-us coming but ya gotta be at work

By Bella Bear Stocks and Briton Warrior Stocks

So, my dad is working to finish up on da language on another bonus fur you guys but soma the detailz are a little sticky, like my paws.

The most biggest theng iz how much, how it getz reported and whatter the rulz. So here iz what Ima thinkin is gonna happen. The cash from the state in 27L hastabe reported to retirement so that helps retirement ,but cuts cash in the pocket. 31A money doesn't haveta be reported, but it has strings for at risk. That'll mean you gotta be at work without docked days. Ima not talkin

about time on the boat here. It means no dayz where you are penalized a day pay for missin without dayz in the bank or fur disciplinary reasons. So behave, showup and you will get some extra lettuce in the pocket in June. The exact amount and the starting date of the rulez, plus any other possible rulez, will be announced as soon as the curly (de)tails get wurked out.



# Forest Park is looking for a new Principal,....again

Monday morning, February 9, Forest Park staff arrived to the building to learn their Principal, Randolph Hull, had abruptly resigned his position effective immediately. Not much understanding or rationale has been provided for his departure, but changes are being made to cover his responsibilities as quickly as possible.

Early Learning Center Principal Val Jens was reassigned part time to cover much of the job for the past several weeks. Members of the staff have also filled in as Teacher in Charge and secretarial staff has been appropriated to help in the front office.

Coupled with the departure of their instructional coach, there has been a great deal of change in the building.

Central administration gave the remaining staff high marks in helping out and continuing to provide full services with as little drop off as possible. Superintendent Christine Gibson, remarked that the entire staff really stepped up in a professional manner and provided the support to our kids and their families.

# EFE seeking officer candidates for upcoming school year

At the end of the current school year, EFE President Lincoln Stocks has announced his retirement. Having served as the president for more than 20 years there has been a consistent and reliable leadership group in place for a long time.

Also departing at the end of the year will be Treasurer Barb Mayer, a retiree, and Secretary Beth Bur, also a retiree of the district. Both have served for several years in these positions, but felt leaving as a group would give new leadership a great opportunity to bring a new staff along and have the opportunity to learn and grow in their respective positions all together.

The catch here is that there have been very few people demonstrating an interest in stepping forward to take on the additional workload. Interest in running for office or actual nominations for any of these offices need to be sent to the president in writing accepted by the nominee by April 29, 2026, or in person at the general membership meeting that same day for consideration.

# Constitutional changes to be considered

The Executive council will be considering several Constitutional changes at the next Executive Council meeting to discuss some areas we need to address regarding dues and compliance practices.

The most significant changes focus on dues. We currently have language requiring a local rate of 1.25% of starting wages and .5% of para wages as the EFE draw for dues. We have not increased dues in compliance with that language as the recent increases in wages would have significantly raised dues beyond what is necessary for us to meet our obligations. The change considered would make that language reflect that dues shall not exceed the levels listed instead of mandating an increase upon every raise in pay.

The second substantial proposal seeks to allow non-tenured staff to hold officer positions. Currently, probationary employment must be completed to become eligible for the negotiating team positions.

Other issues are smaller language changes to reflect current practices consistent with our reduced size of membership. Any amendment proposals that are approved by the Executive Council will come before the membership for consideration at the General Membership Meeting in April.

# GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING April 29, 2026



**The EFE will host its Spring General Membership Meeting on Wednesday, April 29, 2026 in the High School Auditorium at 4:00 p.m.**

The first order of business will be nominations for the offices of President, Secretary and Treasurer. Nominations will be closed on the floor and a determination for the need of an election will be made.

If you are interested in holding the office of President, you must have achieved tenure in this district, be a member in good standing and be nominated by another member.

If it is prior to the meeting, submission of the nomination to the president should be accompanied by an acceptance by the nominee. If a nomination is to emerge from the floor at the meeting, the nominee must be present to accept the nomination.

The other positions do not require tenure. The nomination procedure is the same other than that stipulation.

We will then consider any Constitutional changes recommended by the Executive Council.

<https://www.mobilize.us/aft/event/901615/>

If You are a concerned citizen and you don't like the direction the current administration in D.C. is taking this country, then you need to be a part of this. It will be remembered as something akin to the Civil Rights movement in time. An address link to get involved is on the top of this page.

