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JOE EBLE (right), longtime recording secretary of the Southwestern Illinois Central

Labor Council, with Scot Luchtefeld,
president of the Southwestern Illinois Central
Labor Council, at the group's 2015
Christmas party, is retiring. – Labor Tribune
file photo

By CARL GREEN

Illinois Correspondent

Belleville, IL – It was three decades ago when Joe Eble signed on as recording secretary of the Southwestern Illinois Central Labor Council. It didn't sound like such an important thing, and Joe had served in plenty of other positions for the Labor Movement in the Metro-East.

But something about the job and the man clicked into place, providing the Metro-East Labor community an invaluable center of information activity for many years. Hardly a week would go by without Eble sending a battery of emails recording the Labor goings-on of the region and the state.

If you needed everyone to know about something, you had to get it to Joe, and he would do the rest. But now he's retiring for health reasons, so it's the end of the Eble era.

A TEACHER FIRST

True to form, Eble provided a rundown of his career and Labor positions that show how this soft-spoken Labor dynamo came to be. He's a teacher, actually, hired by Cahokia School District 187 in 1968 to teach Social Studies, American History, German and English.

In 1974, he became a building rep, and he joined the bargaining team in 1975, just in time for a major strike. In 1977, the Cahokia Commonfields Federation of Teachers elected him their high school vice president, then executive vice president and grievance committee chair. He served as president of the union from 1990 to 1999.

In 1991, he joined the executive board of the Illinois Federation of Teachers, and its executive committee in 1995.

He remains a delegate to the IFT's Southwest Area Council, was that council's treasurer from 1993 to 2016 and its secretary before that. He joined the Belleville Trades and Labor Organization as executive recording secretary in 2001 and continued in that role when the group became part of the Southwestern Illinois Central Labor Council.

UNBELIEVABLE BROTHER

Eble broadened his efforts to include the larger Labor Movement, serving as treasurer of the 23rd District COPE, then the 21st District COPE and, until last year as treasurer of 12th District COPE, for a total of almost 40 years.

Add to all that numerous training sessions and conventions on the state and national level, plus pamphlet drops, phone banks and get-out-the-vote campaigns.

“Joe is an unbelievable and untiring Labor Brother who is always striving to help others, not only in the Labor Movement but in everyday life as well,” said Scot Luchtefeld, president of the Labor Council. “It was with great respect and pride that I recommended emeritus status for brother Eble to our executive board, with it passing unanimously.”

Joe's parting message



EBLE

Eble leaves this parting message for the Labor Council:

“During the past three decades, it has been a pleasure to get to know and to work with each of you and the others that have helped to make our Labor Council one of the best, if not the best, in Illinois.

“I wish you the best of luck as you go forward to lead the fight to help our working men and women. If not physically, I will be there in spirit.

“I was lucky to have known and worked with a generation of government leaders,” he added. “But now it is time for someone else to work with the current leaders.”

He is being replaced as recording secretary by Council member Marcia Boone Campbell, formerly secretary-treasurer of the Illinois Federation of Teachers.

“Marcia has her work cut out for her,” Council President Scot Luchtefeld said. “She also has the same undying Labor spirit, always willing to help anyone needing assistance as Brother Eble did, and she will be a great asset to our executive board and Council.”

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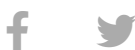


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