



# Teamsters South Sound



Members of Teamsters Local 117

Teamsters Local 117: 14675 Interurban Ave. S, Suite 307 • Tukwila, WA 98168 (206) 441-4860 • [www.teamsters117.org](http://www.teamsters117.org)

*Join us!*

Teamsters Local 117  
Holiday Membership Meeting  
December 16, 2010

Your Local Union's holiday membership meeting extravaganza is just around the corner. On December 16 at 7PM, hundreds of members of Teamsters Local 117 will gather at their Union hall in Tukwila for a festive evening of cookies, punch, and – best of all – free stuff.

As is tradition at this event, the regular order of Union business is generally suspended at the outset of the meeting and the gift giving promptly commences.

Last year, a total of 64 prizes were awarded, including several iPods, Wiis, power tools, bottles of wine, and three flat screen televisions.

"This is our way of showing our gratitude to our members for their extraordinary contribution to this Union," said Local 117 Secretary-Treasurer, Tracey A. Thompson.

If last year's numbers are any indication, the Union auditorium will be packed, so South Sounders should plan to arrive early. For more information, talk to your Business Representative or visit your Local Union's website at [www.teamsters117.org](http://www.teamsters117.org).

## Arbitrator puts a halt to skimming at the PAF



Local 117 members at the Public Assembly Facilities in Tacoma celebrate arbitration win.

It's a practice employers try again and again: They hire up a group of temporary workers to perform bargaining unit work.

It's called skimming, and it's a blatant attempt to circumvent your Union. In most cases, it's also a violation of your collective bargaining agreement that requires, at the very least, a call to your Business Representative, if not a grievance.

At the City of Tacoma's Public Assembly Facilities (PAF), one such skimming grievance led to an arbitration award that provided back pay compensation to a group of 18 employees at the Tacoma Convention Center and Tacoma Dome.

"The PAF offered work to temporary employees that the Public Employment

Relations Commission (PERC) had previously designated as our members' work," said Local 117's Public Sector Coordinator, Matthew House.

House filed a grievance on behalf of members at the PAF and a year and a half later, with the legal counsel of Local 117 Staff Attorney Jim Smith, an arbitrator ruled in their favor.

"We should have the right of first refusal over our work," said Joan Bichsel, a 19-year Facilities Maintenance Worker at the Tacoma Dome. "This was a way for management to hire temporary low-paid workers with no benefits. My co-workers and I are happy that we won, and happy that the arbitrator looked at the case with an open mind."



## Member in the SPOTLIGHT: Joann Futch

### Teamsters building stronger communities



City of Pacific Youth Coordinator, Joann Futch

For 16 years, Joann Futch, the Youth Coordinator at the City of Pacific, has worked tirelessly, giving back to the children of the community she loves.

Now, for her commitment to area youth, the Auburn School Board has recognized her with the Betty Smith 'Spirit of Education' award. Betty Smith was a community educator who was known for her work with the Auburn School Board.

Ms. Futch was nominated for the award by City of Pacific Councilmember, Leanne Guier, who describes Ms. Futch as "the guiding light for the City of Pacific's Youth Program from its infancy in January of 1995 when she started as the Youth Coordinator, to our flourishing Youth Programs today."

Ms. Futch received the award at a ceremony at the Auburn Performing Arts Center in October.

#### ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS AND

#### YOUTH

Out of her Community Center office in Pacific, Ms. Futch runs an astonishing array of programs for children ages 0-18, including a tiny tots' program, a computer lab, a nutrition program, open gym, arts and crafts, and countless more.

"I love the kids – that's what keeps me here," she says. "Watching the kids grow and develop into young adults – it's

incredibly rewarding."

This year to date, Ms. Futch's work has touched the lives of nearly 6,000 children.

#### TRAGEDY STRIKES HOME

Sadly, Ms. Futch's experience at the Community Center has also been marked by tragedy.

Shortly after receiving the award, she was busy preparing for the Community Center's annual basketball tournament in memory of Shiloh Drott, a 21-year-old city of Pacific resident and role model for children, who was fatally shot at the location in 2008.

"It was a terrible tragedy that you never expect to happen in a small community," said Ms. Futch. "Shiloh was a hero and likely saved the lives of several children that night."

The event will also serve as a fundraiser to renovate a room at the Community Center complex, which will be called the 'Blue Room' in Mr. Drott's honor. If you would like to donate to the fund, please contact the City of Pacific at 253-929-1100.

### CONTRACT NEWS:

**Congratulations!** to Local 117 members at the **CITY OF TACOMA - CLASS AND COMP**, who ratified a 2-year deal on October 27 with 95% member approval. **Congrats!** also to members at the **CITY OF FIFE** who ratified a new 3-year collective bargaining agreement on November 2, 2010.

"In today's economy, our contract was fairly decent," said Shop Steward Michael Porter Field of the City of Fife. "Nobody lost their job and we're moving forward, not backwards. Nowadays, that's saying a lot."



IN OUR VIEW

# Pierce County Unions' Role Distorted in the Press

To suggest, as Pierce County Executive Pat McCarthy does in a recent Tacoma News Tribune article, *Pierce County pay raises: They're complicated*, that unionized workers have drained County coffers and prospered in an economic recession is simply untrue.

Like working people in the rest of the country, the majority of Pierce County employees have been profoundly impacted by the economic downturn. They have either been laid off or threatened with layoffs; they are struggling to pay the ever-increasing costs of health care, and they are working hard to keep up with their mortgage payments.

These workers – clerical workers, custodians, maintenance workers, counselors, and many others – constitute the bulk of unionized workers at the County.

The fact is that the highest compensated County employees – attorneys, engineers, managers, Department heads and members of the County's Executive Staff – are not represented by labor unions.

County Executive McCarthy understands this and could have frozen wages for high earners and other non-represented employees at Pierce County as her colleague to the north, Dow Constantine, did at King County. This move would have saved the County millions and prevented the layoff of 32 County employees.

It also would have set the tone for constructive dialogue between unions and County officials in contract negotiations. Instead, McCarthy handed herself and members of the County Council a 3% raise. The raise was given despite her recent rejection of a 1.5% wage increase for 911 Dispatchers and Record Specialists at the Law Enforcement Support Agency. McCarthy also provided salary increases to all non-represented employees, even those who are already at the top of the County

pay scale. For her, then, to suggest that Unions that negotiated increases for their members in good times are to blame for County mismanagement is disingenuous at best.

Union members at Pierce County understand full well the impact of the financial crisis and are keenly aware of the sacrifices needed to assist the struggling County.

After all, it is Union members at the County – not management – who have been threatened with layoffs and are confronted with the increasingly demanding working conditions resulting from the

economic downturn.

In 2009, Union members responded to County officials' pleas for help by negotiating a \$500,000 savings for the County when they voted to switch to the Teamsters Health and Welfare plan. This year Union members offered to discuss all aspects of the current labor agreements, but the County refused.

In an economic downturn, it is easy to blame working people for fiscal irresponsibility perpetrated by others. Let's not forget who caused the financial meltdown. The actions of unscrupulous bankers and Wall Street racketeers emptied our municipal and county coffers – not unionized workers.

Instead of finger pointing, it's time that County officials exhibit the kind of leadership that makes prudent use of County resources and recognizes the invaluable services that Pierce County workers provide.

## NEW STEWARDS' CORNER

*Congrats! to two of your Union's newly-elected Stewards in the South Sound.*



**MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ**  
Public Works, City of Pacific

*"I got involved to make positive changes in our workplace regarding workers' rights, benefits, and to help provide a strong voice for my co-workers."*



**FRANK BONNER**  
Public Works, City of Steilacoom

*"I'm excited about the prospect of participating in negotiations and addressing some of the issues facing my co-workers down here."*

## Teamsters build Fantasy Lights display



*The Teamsters Fantasy Lights Crew at Pierce County!*

**D**id you know that members of Teamsters Local 117 at Pierce County install the largest drive through holiday lights display in the Pacific Northwest?

That's right – Pierce County's Fantasy Lights in Spanaway Park takes you through 2.5 miles of animated displays in Spanaway, Washington.

The display, featuring nearly 300 exhibits and thousands of lights, opens on Thanksgiving Day and runs through New Year's weekend. Fantasy Lights is

located at 14905 Bresemann Blvd. in Spanaway and is open from 5 to 9 P.M.

*Thanks to Local 117 Shop Steward, Becky Little, for sending in this great photo of the Fantasy Lights crew of Teamsters at Pierce County!*

## WELCOME, EVIE!



*Local 117 Rep., Evie Shannon*

**F**or Evie Shannon, Union values came early. Growing up in a large Irish family with 7 brothers and sisters, she quickly learned how to defend

herself.

She also learned how to speak her mind. "My father was a great debater," says Evie. "We spent every evening at the dinner table debating different subjects, especially politics."

In 1987, Evie went to work for the Lake Washington School District as a bus driver. "As a Teamster, I learned very quickly the strength of the contract, the power of the language, and how it could help me succeed in my job. I also knew that if I wanted to have a voice, I needed to get involved."

Get involved, Evie did. At Lake Washington, she served as a Shop Steward for 10 years and participated in several contract negotiations.

She also sat on the Teamsters Local 763 Executive Board, first as Vice-President and then as President. In 2004, she landed a job as a Business Representative at Local 763, and in 2005 she became a board member on the Joint Council 28 Teamsters Women Caucus.

"In my work with the Teamsters, I have especially enjoyed empowering women," she says. "It gives me an opportunity to introduce them to the strength of the Union."

Evie was hired by Local 117 in October 2010 and will represent the City of Pacific, the Tacoma libraries, the Pierce County Humane Society and the City of Steilacoom in the South Sound region. She can be reached at [evie.shannon@teamsters117.org](mailto:evie.shannon@teamsters117.org) or by phone at 206-441-4860 ext. 1235

**TEAMSTERS LOCAL 117**



# Holiday Toy Drive



### Support the Children of Laid Off Teamsters

**T**he Teamsters for Tomorrow at your Local Union are sponsoring a holiday Toy Drive.

All donations will go to the families of laid off members of Teamsters Local 117. If you know a family in need this holiday season, please talk to your Business Representative. Look for the donation box in your workplace. Deadline for donating toys is December 6.

**For more information:** Call 206-441-4860 x1222 or visit your Local Union's website at [www.teamsters117.org](http://www.teamsters117.org).

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**December 6, 2010** – Teamsters Holiday Toy Drive - Last Day to Donate!

**December 16, 2010** – Teamsters Local 117 Holiday Membership Mtg.

**January 17, 2011** – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - March & Rally

For more Teamsters news, visit the Local 117 website at [www.teamsters117.org](http://www.teamsters117.org). Connect with other Local 117 members on Facebook or follow us on Twitter.