



Teamsters Local 117

Teamster Talk



Fighting for Workers' Rights Since 1936

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

TEAMSTERS VOLUNTEER FOR OSO DISASTER RELIEF

Aramark member and family lose their home in tragedy



"The magnitude of this disaster is mind-boggling." - Stephanie Shook, City of Pacific Shop Steward

When tragedy strikes, a community finds strength in standing together. First responders rush to the scene, while neighbors, family, and co-workers step in to lend a helping hand. The Oso mudslide cut short the lives of at least 41 people, but it didn't quell the spirit of those afflicted by the disaster.

Mike Andrews, a 7-year member with Aramark who lost his home in the slide, expressed deep gratitude for the help offered to him and his family. But it hasn't been easy.

"It's been a real struggle," Andrews said. "With the water levels fluctuating, we've had a lot of challenges. We were able to row in and collect some of our valuables. But the house is lost."

Andrews and his family were on their way to a doctor's appointment in Seattle when he got news of the slide. "One

of my fellow route men called me and asked if I was okay," he said. Andrews rushed back to the scene after realizing the magnitude of the incident. He was just able to save his livestock before the river flooded his property.

Andrews' house now stands under ten feet of water.

TEAMSTERS RESPOND TO TRAGEDY

As is the case in any tragedy, there are those who rise to the call of duty. One of them was Local 117 member, Sergeant Jimmy Fletcher.

Sergeant Fletcher, who works at the Monroe Correctional Complex (MCC), volunteered on his day off to help in any way needed. Fletcher wrote about his experience:

"I was able to take part in the search on Friday. I can say this much that seeing the video and pictures on television and

the internet do not do the scene any justice. The physical demands were the hardest I have ever been involved with in my life. Just for my team to go a hundred yards probably took us 45 minutes because we were constantly doing self-rescues on our own team mates. A good number of volunteer search teams were off duty first responders such a medics, fire fighters, police, corrections and military. The dedication out of the volunteers was very comforting and also because each one was flying some form of insignia from their own department to show support and respect for the families of the victims and of course the victims themselves."

Another Local 117 volunteer was MCC Officer Tom Gent, who has been working to assure that food donations for animals are distributed to those in need.

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Politics Matters - Get Involved! Political Action Meetings

In November 2014, all 98 members of the state House of Representatives and half of the 49 members of the state Senate are up for election. Our ability to win in Olympia on working family issues hinges on who wins in November.

We need more members to get involved in the political process!

Your Union's political action team has been touring the state, holding PAC meetings in your community. The next two meetings will be held on May 19 and May 20 in Tukwila and Tacoma. Visit www.teamsters117.org to RSVP or contact Dustin Lambro at 206-441-4860 ext. 1262 for more info.

A message from your Secretary-Treasurer



Tracey A. Thompson

Brothers and Sisters:

When the magnitude of the Oso mudslide tragedy became apparent, a group of Washington State correctional officers, of their own volition, answered the call for volunteers to help in the disaster relief effort.

These included Teamsters like Sergeant Jimmy Fletcher and Officer Tom Gent. The

disaster called into action thousands of our country's finest – men and women who make their careers serving the public. In all, 211 agencies – local, county, federal, tribal, charitable organizations, as well as the business community – were involved in the relief effort.

"The heart of these people is incredible – they're not giving up," said Stephanie Shook, a records specialist at the City of Pacific Police Department and also a Teamster, who was dispatched to the scene in her capacity as a public information officer.

After several days of exhausting work, Shook volunteered to redeploy over the Easter holiday weekend to escort the local and national media who were covering the incident. She willingly signed up to return, even after she had fallen into a sinkhole the week earlier and had to be rescued by the National Guard.

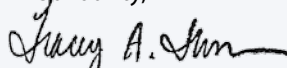
Like the other brave men and women who responded to the call, she risked her life to aid the families stricken by the disaster.

Shook, Fletcher and Gent are no strangers to service. As public safety professionals, they have made a career of putting their lives on the line to protect our communities. For them, serving the public is second nature. When disaster strikes, as it did in Oso, they answer the call of duty, in their official capacity, or as volunteers, making personal sacrifices to the benefit the greater good.

The first week of May is Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW). The theme for PSRW 2014 is Proud to Serve. Public servants deserve our deep gratitude for the work they do in providing vital services to our communities. They clear our streets during snow emergencies, maintain our roads, clean up our parks, and keep our communities safe.

Too often public employees are the target of unwarranted criticism, but when disaster strikes they are the first to respond. We need to honor them.

In Solidarity,


Tracey A. Thompson
Secretary-Treasurer

TEAMSTER HEROES

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Stephanie Shook, a Local 117 Shop Steward at the City of Pacific, was sent to the scene by the City in her capacity as a public information officer. "There were 211 agencies involved in the relief effort. The level of care that people have shown in processing the site is unreal. The heart that these people have shown is incredible - they're not giving up," she said.

Stephanie volunteered to redeploy over the Easter weekend to help out.

The Red Cross and the United Way of Snohomish County have set up disaster relief funds for the families that have been affected by this tragedy.

The Teamsters 117 Executive Board has approved membership assistance for Mike and his family. ●

LET'S LIFT THE FLOOR FOR ALL WORKERS

\$15 for Seattle group surrounds City Hall



Secretary-Treasurer Thompson calling for higher wages for workers.

Low-wage workers and their supporters surrounded City Hall in Seattle on April 23 to demand that the City Council take action to raise the minimum wage to \$15/hr. A higher minimum wage in the City of Seattle will lift the floor for thousands of workers and make it easier for unions to negotiate contracts with higher wages for their members.

Many Local 117 members who work in the parking and steel industries in particular would directly benefit from an increase in the minimum wage.

"If you get a good job with a livable wage, you can go to school, you can support your family, you can pay your bills, and you can take your kids to the doctor. This will change the entire community," said Abdirahman Abdullahi, a Local 117 member at Hertz. ●

TEAMSTERS VOLUNTEER AT EMERGENCY FOOD NETWORK

Stepping up to help feed hungry families in our community



Teamster volunteers repack donated grain for Pierce County families.

Your Union is about bringing people together and creating a strong unified voice for working families. Teamsters 117 is also committed to building stronger communities. In that spirit, a group of 14 Teamsters volunteered for several hours on April 16 as a part of the **Emergency Food Network's** (EFN) Volunteer Repack Project.

Together, 117 members repacked 5,400 pounds of oats. This equates to approximately 4,320 meals that are now ready for distribution to Pierce County food banks, meal sites, and shelters.

This is the second time this year that Teamsters 117 has organized a crew to help with the repack. On January 4, a team of **Food Services of America Shop Stewards** participated in the program.

EFN is the primary food distributor to more than 60 emergency food sites in Pierce County. To get this food distributed to the individuals and families in need, EFN enlists volunteers to help repackaging fresh, frozen, and dry bulk foods into smaller, family-sized portions.

Our third Emergency Food Network volunteer day is scheduled for Saturday June 28, 2014 from 12 P.M. to 3 P.M.

We are looking for volunteers who would like to help out! If you are interested in joining us, give us a call at 206-441-4860 or talk to your Business Rep. ●

WORKERS SERVICING SEA-TAC AIRPORT VOTE TO JOIN LOCAL 117

Parking shuttlers seek a voice

Workers at two ATZ-owned parking lots that serve Sea-Tac Airport have voted to join Teamsters Local 117. The 40 workers came together seeking job security, fair and equal treatment, strong representation, and respect. The workers voted to become Teamsters in an NLRB election on April 18.

"We are excited to have the strength of the Teamsters behind us," said Ahmed Dahir, a 2-year ATZ employee. "The union gives us a voice and a chance to make a better life."

The ATZ employees transport passengers to and from Sea-Tac Airport. They perform the same work as their counterparts at other parking facilities servicing the airport, but they are excluded from receiving the benefits of SeaTac's new minimum wage ordinance.

"We're not waiting for the courts to rule on this, we need respect now. Sea-Tac Airport brings millions of dollars into our community, but many workers are still struggling to make ends meet," Dahir said.

Let's welcome Dahir and the other new members of Teamsters Local 117! ●



Help Feed Hungry Kids!

You can help feed hungry kids in Pierce County by bringing a peanut butter donation to your Union Hall or giving it to your Business Rep.

The **Backpack Program** is a Pierce County initiative that allows kids who may not have access to food over the weekend to prepare healthy meals for themselves.

Here's how you can help local families and hungry children:

1. **Bring a jar (or more) of peanut butter to work and your Shop Steward will get it to your Business Rep. You can also bring your donations by the Union Hall.**
2. **Ask your co-workers to donate peanut butter and remind them to buy it at a Union store like Fred Meyer or Safeway.**
3. **Put a flyer for the program up in your shop.**

Get your donations in by May 12! Thank you for helping to fight hunger!

A MEMBER REFLECTS ON THE EVOLUTION OF 117

Teamster Dewayne Collins writes about how the Local has changed



Dewayne Collins at march for \$15 event.

Today I pose the question: How would you like to be part of a union that is built, designed, and ready for the 21st century. Well guess what? You are a part. A part of a well-oiled fighting machine that is ready for this war on workers.

Teamsters Local 117 is not like most unions. Instead of waiting for change, we change things. Instead of waiting for employers to treat us with respect, we demand respect. In a word, we adapt. Adapt to the climate of the world we live in, while teaching members to adapt within their workplace environment.

So how did we get here?

Since 1997, my first year as a Teamster, I have changed, and the landscape of labor has also changed. Like most union members, I was happy just to be a part of a union. I was happy just to have a good paying job. I didn't think my voice mattered. In those days, the union was

reactionary. We sat and waited for our contract to expire, while the employer mostly set the tone for negotiations. Shop stewards only worried about grievances. There were no caucuses, and little in terms of political engagement.

But a few years ago, something started to change. Our Union started to change. Not only in the way we looked, but also in our day-to-day operations. Rank-and-file members were encouraged to participate in legislative affairs. Stewards were encouraged to get more involved with their central labor councils. Business agents became organizers. And organizers became community activists.

UNION CAUCUSES = UNION POWER

In 2004, we started building our union caucuses. Now, we have five caucuses that members can be a part of: The Teamsters Women's Caucus, Comité Latino, Teamsters for Tomorrow, Black Teamsters United, and the LGBT Caucus.

Teamsters 117 started to see a greater purpose, a greater vision for our union. They realized that we are not here just to collect dues and save jobs. Members are getting involved, and gaining a sense of pride.

The rank and filers are what make this union successful, but we are not alone. In this war on workers, Local 117 has many troops: business agents, staff members, retirees, and an Executive Board. No one is too big or too small to be a soldier in the 117 army.

Fast forward to 2014 ... and here we are, one of the strongest unions in the country. This is due in part to our diversity. Not only on our Executive

Board, not only in our membership, but also in the shops we represent. Within our midst, there are republicans, democrats, independents, as well as other political affiliations. But the group is more important than any one individual. When we fight as a group, we win as a group.

"When we fight, we win" has become a rallying cry for us. "When we fight, we win" has become our mantra. ●

Thanks to Dewayne Collins, a Shop Steward at Seattle Cold Storage who wrote this piece as a part of his participation on the Local's new Communications Committee.

2nd Annual Teamsters

CAR SHOW

June 21 @ 9:30

Teamsters Hall - Tukwila



Fire up your engines! It's time for our 2nd annual Car & Bike Show. We will have prizes, goodie bags, grub, and a bouncy house for kids.

- Pre-registration: \$15;
- Day of the event: \$20;
- Retirees: \$10.

View a pre-registration form at www.teamsters117.org.

The event is sponsored by the Teamsters Caucuses to benefit the caucuses and the Local 117 Solidarity Scholarship for continuing education.

LOCAL 117 EVENTS - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

May 19, 2014 - King County Political Action Committee Meeting

May 20, 2014 - Pierce County Political Action Committee Meeting

June 19, 2014 - General Membership Meeting

June 21, 2014 - Teamsters Car Show

Sign up online to receive an electronic copy of Teamster Talk at www.teamsters117.org.