



Teamsters South Sound

Winter 2014

For members of Teamsters 117 in Pierce and South King County

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

MEMBER SOLIDARITY LEADS TO NEW CONTRACT AT THE CITY OF AUBURN

Members vote overwhelmingly to approve new agreement



Local 117 Shop Steward Rich Hill

Members of Teamsters 117, working at the **City of Auburn**, have a new contract. The members voted overwhelmingly to ratify the City's proposal late last year.

The new agreement increases wages, protects members' retirement security, and improves their health and welfare benefits. The agreement will also save the City approximately \$100,000, which can be used to help pay for road and safety improvements.

UNION MEMBERS STANDING STRONG

The new agreement did not come easily, however. It took members standing together in solidarity and having the courage to reject an earlier, substandard proposal.

Pressure in the media also helped. Local 117 Secretary-Treasurer, Tracey A. Thompson, published an editorial in the **Auburn Reporter** that ultimately moved

the City off of its "philosophical position" not to provide Teamster benefits, even if they saved the City money.

Thompson wrote:

"Taken together, these proposals would add, at the very least, a few hundred thousand dollars to the City's depleted general fund. The City could use the savings to fill potholes, maintain streets, clean up city parks or beef up community policing. The City could stop outsourcing work to outside bidders, ensure the long-term maintenance of the Mountain View Cemetery and the City's Golf Course, or spare taxpayers from utility rate increases."

UNION POWER THROUGH DRIVE

The ratified agreement also adds DRIVE language to the contract. DRIVE is the Teamsters non-partisan political action committee. DRIVE is funded through the voluntary contributions of members. DRIVE helps protect your state pension and pressures state and local politicians to help achieve strong contracts.

More than 20 members at the City of Auburn have already taken the first step in protecting their rights in Olympia by contributing to DRIVE. If you are interested in contributing, please contact your Shop Steward to get a payroll deduction card.

Congratulations to members at the City of Auburn on your new contract and thank you to the outstanding work of Rich Hill and Mark Harris on your Union bargaining committee. This agreement would not have been possible without their hard work and perseverance. ●

COME LOBBY FOR CHANGE!

Lobby Day scheduled for Feb. 20



Teamster Lobby Day 2013

The 2014 legislative session is right around the corner, and we are busy establishing our legislative priorities so that we can hit the ground running.

The session starts on January 14 and will last for 60 days. It's a short session, so acting quickly and decisively with lots of member support is key. A few of the things we will be working on include:

- Supporting efforts to raise the minimum wage;
- Opposing all attacks on the state's pension system;
- Supporting Family and Medical Leave Insurance;
- Passing a statewide Paid Sick Days bill.

You can view a complete list of Local 117's legislative priorities on our website at **www.teamsters117.org**.

To get folks engaged, we have organized a Lobby Day scheduled for February 20 so that you have a chance to speak directly with your legislators about critical issues.

To sign up for Lobby Day, contact Political Action Coordinator Dustin Lambro at 206-441-4860 ext. 1262. ●

A message from your Secretary-Treasurer



Tracey A. Thompson

Brothers and Sisters:

The Boeing Machinists are not the only ones seeing their defined benefit pension plan under attack. For the last several years, corporate-backed politicians and the media have been trying to gut the pensions of public employees in the name of "reform."

Typically these proposals favor moving workers from a defined benefit retirement plan to a 401k.

Make no mistake – 401k plans, while now widespread in the private sector, do not provide working people with the retirement security that defined benefit pensions provide. With 401ks, workers must invest their own money and then bear all of the risk of those investments. If your investments lose money, as 401k investments did precipitously during the Great Recession, your retirement savings can be decimated.

FIGHTING TO DEFEND OUR PENSIONS

That's why Teamsters are standing with public employees and with workers in the private sector, like the Machinists, to defend defined benefit plans so that working people can enjoy a secure retirement.

For workers in the public sector, that means getting down to Olympia and talking to your legislators about the need to preserve the state's pension system. It means signing up for **Teamsters Lobby Day** on February 20 and getting more involved in your Union.

ADDING THE TEAMSTERS PENSION

To ensure a secure retirement, Teamsters in the public sector also have the option of adding the **Teamsters pension** as a supplemental defined benefit.

The **Western Conference of Teamsters Pension Trust Fund** is the largest area-wide multi-employer pension plan in the United States. It covers 200,000 active participants through pension agreements negotiated by local unions with more than 1,600 employers predominantly in 13 Western states. The Trust is in excellent condition and is well-funded. Thousands of retirees depend on the Teamsters pension for a stable income in their retirement years.

In January 2012, workers at the City of Kent voted to add the Teamsters pension. Workers in the City of Tacoma and the City of Pacific have followed suit.

If you are interested in setting up a pension appointment for your workgroup, talk to your Business Representative.

In Solidarity,

Tracey A. Thompson
Secretary-Treasurer

By Jeff Clark

IMPROVING THE LABOR MANAGEMENT RELATIONSHIP

Members receive communications and conflict resolution training



Some things in life we control; others we don't. In the workplace, how we treat each other and how we communicate fall

into the first category.

In an effort to provide members with more tools to improve communication and solve problems, Teamsters 117 and the Department of Labor Relations at the City of Tacoma, in coordination with the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC), recently offered a training to City employees on conflict resolution and communication.

The training was held at the City of Tacoma's Fleet Operations on December 6. Approximately 40 Teamsters attended the training along with members of several other unions.

The class focused on communication styles and how to resolve conflict to create beneficial solutions to common problems.

Instead of focusing on each other's flaws, members were encouraged to actively listen and to try to understand each other's perspectives so that a mutually-beneficial solution can be reached.

The result of this training is yet to be determined, but with the new tools and skills learned in the class, members will have a greater opportunity to achieve the best possible outcome when conflict does arise in the workplace. ●

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH "RIGHT TO WORK?"

So-called "Right to Work" laws are hurting workers



Don't be fooled by "Right to Work"

As Boeing Machinists prepared to take their contract vote earlier this month, some corporate-backed legislators raised the specter of "Right-to-Work" in an attempt to silence the growing discord of working people. What exactly is "Right-to-Work" and how would it impact us?

Big businesses in Washington D.C. and our state have funded efforts in

recent years to enact Right-To-Work (for less) laws, which prohibit Unions and employers from entering into Union security clauses – which require all workers who benefit from a contract to share in the cost of representation.

What you don't hear from folks who support these disastrous laws is the consequences of passing these in states where they already have Right-to-Work for less legislation:

- Workers in RTW states earn, on average, \$5,500 less per year (or \$458 per month) than in states without RTW laws
- Employers in RTW states provide health insurance at a lower rate than in states without RTW, and the number of uninsured adults and children is higher in states without RTW laws
- The poverty rates for adults and

children are both higher in states with RTW (for less) laws

- Workplace deaths are a staggering 58% higher in RTW states

Right-to-Work (for less) hurts everyone, except Wall Street CEOs, by driving down quality-of-life standards for workers and their communities. Make no mistake: we should expect the fight to come to Washington State this year, and we will need to be vigilant to counteract the forces trying to undermine the rights of working people in our state. ●

Teamster Lobby Day **February 20, 2014**

We will be discussing Right to Work (for less) legislation at our upcoming Teamster Lobby Day on February 20.

If you are interested in talking with your legislators about why this would harm workers, please call Political Coordinator Dustin Lambro at 206-441-4862 x 1262 or by email at dustin.lambro@teamsters117.org.

DON'T LET CORPORATE LOBBYISTS DETERMINE YOUR FUTURE!

Public Employees: Take a stand for working families. Contribute to DRIVE!

Consider how politics affects your job. As public employees, decisions about your collective bargaining rights, your job security, and your wages and benefits are made by elected officials in Olympia and in Washington D.C.

The trouble is that politicians are heavily influenced by corporate lobbyists who don't have your best interest at heart. In fact, big business outspends working families on politics by more than 15-1, often pushing their anti-worker agenda.

Public employees can fight back with

DRIVE, the Teamsters' political action committee.

DRIVE stands for Democratic, Republican, Voter Education. DRIVE funds grassroots political action and aggressive lobbying that has helped stopped some of the worst attacks on working people.

Contributions to DRIVE support a wide range of activities:

- DRIVE helps protect your pension plan;
- DRIVE backs political candidates who will stand up for working families;
- DRIVE keeps you informed on the key

issues that affect your future;

- DRIVE supports voter registration to ensure that working families are fairly represented.

Local 117 members in the South Sound in the cities of Fife, Kent, and Auburn can easily enroll in DRIVE by signing up for automatic payroll deduction.

Your family and your livelihood are too important to let corporate lobbyists determine your future. Fight back with DRIVE! To find out how, talk to your Business Representative. ●

WANT TO GET INVOLVED? TRY A TEAMSTER CAUCUS ON FOR SIZE

TFT, BTU, Comite, LGBT, and Women's Caucuses want to plug you in!



The Teamsters for Tomorrow sponsor an annual Toy drive.

There are so many ways to get involved in your Union, but perhaps the easiest way is to join one of the Local's five member caucuses:

- The Teamsters for Tomorrow
- Black Teamsters United
- Comite Latino
- LGBT Caucus
- Teamsters' Women Caucus

Our caucuses provide an excellent opportunity for you to give back to your community and to build Union power and Union pride. Local 117 caucuses organize fundraisers, blood drives and toy drives, educational seminars, barbecues, sporting events, and caucus members have participated together on strike lines and in rallies.

Here are just a few examples of your Union's caucuses at work:

- Over the past five years, the

Teamsters for Tomorrow have donated toys to hundreds of Local 117 families who have fallen on hard times.

- **Black Teamsters United** sponsors an annual summer Blood Drive & BBQ in August, and helps organize the Union's participation in Seattle's annual MLK, Jr. March and Rally.
- **Comite Latino** has organized a number of Union activities including a family BBQ in 2011 and our annual soccer tournament.
- Last year, the caucuses teamed up to sponsor a **Car Show** at the Local. Caucus members staffed tables and cooked hot dogs and tacos for folks who attended the event. The Car Show was a big hit among members, and it helped raise money to fund future caucus events.

Proceeds raised from caucus activities also help fund the Union's **Solidarity Scholarship**, which provides Local 117 members the opportunity to further their education through training or coursework.

To apply for the Solidarity Scholarship, talk to your Business Representative, or visit your Union's website at www.teamsters117.org. To join a Local 117 caucus, call 206-441-4860. ●

WTWT PARTICIPANTS: MAKE YOUR WINTER A HEALTHY ONE

Be sure to complete your annual re-enrollment and take your PHA



If you are a member of Teamsters 117 and you are covered under the **Washington Teamsters Welfare Trust**, be sure to fill out your annual re-enrollment form if you haven't done so already. All WTWT-covered members must complete their re-enrollment every year. *This applies even if you are not making any changes to your plan.*

To complete your re-enrollment, log on to **www.nwadmin.com** or contact Northwest Administrators at (206) 329-4900.

While you are at it, there are a couple of other things that you can do this winter to make sure you and your family stay healthy:

1. *Take your online Personal Health Assessment (PHA). If you and your dependent spouse take your PHA immediately, you may be eligible to save money on your 2014 medical expenses. Talk to your Business Representative for more information.*
2. *Get your annual flu shot. A flu shot is available to eligible participants and their covered dependents with no co-pay.*

Visit **www.nwadmin.com** for your specific plan details. Remember - a happy holiday is a healthy holiday! ●

LOCAL 117 EVENTS - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

January 20, 2014 - MLK Jr. March and Rally

January 28, 2014 - DOC Lobby Day

February 20, 2014 - JC28 Lobby Day

March 8, 2014 - Shop Steward Seminar and Appreciation Day

FOLLOW YOUR LOCAL UNION ON THE WEB!



Join your Union's Facebook page, follow us on Twitter @teamsters117 and watch Local 117 videos on YouTube!

For more Teamsters news, visit the Local 117 website at **www.teamsters117.org**. Connect with Local 117 members on Facebook or follow your Union on Twitter at **@teamsters117**.