



Teamsters South Sound

Fall 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

Local 117 members...

TAKING A GREATER ROLE IN THEIR UNION

More responsibility and new trainings for Shop Stewards



Local 117 Shop Steward training

This summer, we conducted focus groups for 48 members in the public sector, including several Teamsters in the South Sound region. We wanted to hear from you about how to build a stronger Union that can more effectively fight for fair wages and good benefits for all members.

One of the things we learned is that members want more responsibility and to take greater ownership of their Union. They want more active Shop Stewards who play a greater role in the workplace; they want to understand their contract; and they want to get involved.

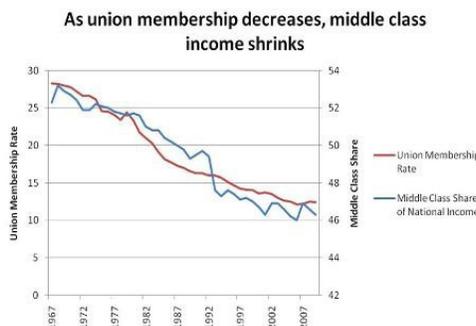
Your feedback has led to a number of exciting changes:

- We have reformatted our membership meetings to make them more engaging.
- We are beefing up our organizing program to build Union density in key industries so that we can improve your wages and benefits.
- We have launched a new program to train Shop Stewards to work with members to resolve first-step issues.
- Shop Stewards will now have the

responsibility to help run Labor Management committee meetings in conjunction with your Business Representative.

These changes will make us stronger as more members get involved. They will also help inoculate us from a greater threat – ongoing efforts in the political arena and through the courts to restrict our rights as Union members to collectively bargain.

It is no surprise that Union density has been in steady decline for the last 40 years, and that middle class has suffered as a result. The decline in Union density nearly parallels the decrease in income for the middle class as illustrated by the chart below:



Unionized workers now represent only 11.3% of the overall workforce down from 20.1% in 1983. With the recent attacks on working families, that number will continue to fall unless Unions like ours transform themselves into more dynamic, member-driven organizations.

That will require all of us to take a more active role. There are already a lot of opportunities to take greater ownership

of your Union from our member-led caucuses to our community volunteer work to our work to elect people who care about working family issues.

If you have other ideas about how we can build a stronger, more cohesive Union or requests for trainings, please share them with your Business Representative.

We want to hear from you! ●



Save the Date!



HOLIDAY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

December 18, 2014 • 7 P.M.

Teamsters Local 117

14675 Interurban Ave S. Tukwila

On December 18, we will be gathering together at the Union hall in Tukwila for solidarity and our annual raffle drawing.

Dozens of prizes are awarded each year, including iPods, Wiis, power tools, bottles of wine, gift cards and televisions sets.

“This is our way of showing our gratitude to our members for their extraordinary contribution to this Union,” said Secretary-Treasurer Tracey Thompson.

Hope you can join us! ●

By Andrea Canini

WORKFORCE CENTRAL GROUP KEEPS ALL OPTIONS ON THE TABLE

Members helped their agency in tough times; now they are fighting for equity



Shop Steward Debra Gibson

The government shutdown of 2013 impacted many of our Teamsters Brothers and Sisters in various ways. For those public sector workers at

Workforce Central in Tacoma, it came in the form of shared sacrifice.

“Our management had come to us and said that in order for us to sustain where we are, we have to give up certain concessions,” said Shop Steward Debra Gibson. As Union members with a voice, the workers came together and voted on what they could afford to give up to keep the agency going and to make sure that nobody got laid off.

They agreed to reduce the employer contribution to their 401a plan and chose to change to a lesser medical plan, causing their out-of-pocket health care costs to increase. They elected to take furlough days, give up some vacation time, and reduce their hours, which caused some to file for unemployment to supplement the lost income.

Overall, the workers opted to give up over \$2 million over the past couple of years in an effort to keep their fellow members

employed and the agency afloat.

In June of this year, the Workforce Central contact expired. Now, the members are in the midst of bargaining for their new contract and fighting to recoup some of their losses that they gave up for the good of the agency when the agency was under financial strain.

“During contract negotiations, we said we want that stuff back. This was never intended to be the way it would be maintained while people were employed here,” Gibson said.

The Workforce Central members met on October 15 to continue discussions regarding their new contract. At the meeting, they unanimously agreed to leave all options on the table to reach a fair contract that moves them forward not backwards.

The group joined Teamsters 117 to obtain protection, job security, and the collective power to negotiate over wages and benefits. There are approximately 45 members at this location.

Workforce Central is an agency that is federally funded through the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. It focuses on providing individuals with services and skills they need to enhance their employability. ●

TENTATIVE AGREEMENT AT THE CITY OF TACOMA

Members to vote on agreement this fall

Good news out of the City of Tacoma! Your Joint Labor Union bargaining committee has achieved a tentative agreement on a 2-year contract. Members will be voting on the agreement in the coming weeks.

The agreement protects members’ health care coverage and creates a wellness program that maintains the current premium share.

A team of four Union representatives from the Tacoma Joint Labor committee will serve on a joint labor-management wellness committee that will meet regularly to discuss and address issues regarding the program, develop newsletters and other communication tools for rolling out the program, and review experience reports, health trust fund and flex account balances.

POLITICAL ACTION THROUGH DRIVE

Your Union bargaining committee was also able to achieve DRIVE language in the tentative agreement. DRIVE stands for Democrat-Republican-Independent Voter-Education and is your Union’s non-partisan political action committee. Your membership to DRIVE helps Teamster families stand up to big business and elect political candidates who care about working people. For more information about becoming a DRIVE participant, talk to your Business Representative.

HELP ON THE WAY FOR ROADS CREWS

In other Teamsters news, the City plans to create a dedicated street fund that will finance 5 new FTEs - all Teamsters - for street maintenance. This is great news for our roads team and for all Tacoma residents who are looking for pothole relief.

This development, along with the tentative agreement and recent assurances from the City Manager that there are no layoffs on the horizon, bodes well for Teamsters across greater Pierce County now and into the future. ●

SOLIDARITY SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO FRED MEYER TEAMSTER



Cody Harris wins scholarship

Congratulations, Cody! Cody Harris, a 20-year Teamster who works at the Fred Meyer distribution center in Puyallup, was awarded a Local 117 Solidarity Scholarship for continuing education at our September general membership meeting. The Local 117 Executive Board approved the award on the recommendation of a scholarship committee consisting of representatives of the Local 117 caucuses.

The Solidarity Scholarship is designed for members seeking to further their education. To apply, fill out the online application and submit it to your Local Union office in Tukwila. The next application deadline is December 1, 2014. ●

TACOMA EQUIPMENT OPERATOR ENCOURAGES MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

After 20 years in the Union, Randy Marquis is stepping up his involvement



Shop Steward Randy Marquis

When Secretary-Treasurer Thompson asks for a motion at the general membership meetings, the first one who invariably raises his hand is **Randy Marquis**, a Shop Steward and heavy equipment operator at the **City of Tacoma**.

Randy is an avid attendee of union meetings where he plays an active role. At the September general membership meeting, Marquis stood up and questioned candidates running for the State legislature if they intended to support statewide Paid Sick Days legislation.

"You've got to attend the meetings," Marquis insists. "You can't just be a dues paying member and sit on the sidelines and expect to see the Union work."

After over two decades at the City, Randy became a Shop Steward last year when an experienced, longtime Steward retired. "I didn't have the ambition for the role, but when Kevin left I wanted to make sure that we maintained his legacy," he said.

Randy serves as a delegate to the Pierce County Labor Council, and he attended the Washington State Labor Council Convention in Wenatchee this summer.

Speaking of the Convention, he said: "It was a great experience. There were some great workshops, and I got to rub shoulders with other people who are concerned with making life better for working people."

Looking ahead, Marquis says he wants to get more involved in his Union's political program. With the election right around the corner, he'll have plenty of opportunity to do just that! ●

It's Our Work!

Let's make sure we protect it

When you work at a big public sector agency, you may feel like you are in a perpetual state of flux. There is constant reorganization, reclassification, hiring, layoffs, and other changes that affect you and your co-workers.



As a Union member in that environment, you have a right to have your voice heard when there are changes in working conditions.

Your employer has a contractual obligation to notify the Union when it plans on implementing those changes. The effects of the changes need to be negotiated at the bargaining table.

If you suspect that changes are in the works that might impact you and your co-workers, make sure you notify your Shop Steward or your Business Representative immediately. *In your Union, you have an advocate that is watching your back and will fight to protect you and keep your job secure.* ●

CASINO NIGHT FUNDRAISER A BIG SUCCESS!

BTU raises money for sickle cell task force to help fight cancer



Teamsters having fun for a cause.

On September 27, Teamster members and their families packed their Union hall for a **Casino Night fundraiser** to help fight cancer.

There were 11 different games tables run by a professional gaming company, dancing with a live DJ, raffle giveaways including two 32" Vizio TVs, and a grand prize of 2 Seahawks tickets for the overall winner.

The proceeds from the event went to support the **Black Teamsters United (BTU)** caucus and a donation will be made to the Sickle Cell Task Force. Learn more about their important work at www.MSSCTF.org.

BTU's mission is "to provide Teamsters with an opportunity to be in an inclusive environment that will enrich, embrace, and respect the diversity of its members."

Every year BTU sponsors an annual Blood Drive, where it collects school supplies for kids heading back to school. If you would like to help in organizing future BTU events, contact Local 117 Vice President Cetris Tucker at 206-441-4860. ●

Get Registered, Get Informed... VOTE!

Make sure to get your ballot in the mail by Nov. 4!

It's election season once again, and time to push our elected leaders to address the issues that are important to working people.

We need to make sure that the legislature funds the contract of our State's correctional employees. We need to protect our workers' comp. system, protect workers against wage theft and defeat laws that try to limit our collective bargaining rights. We need to pass paid sick leave legislation so that no one has to choose between going to work and taking care of a sick child.

The best way to achieve our legislative priorities is if we all exercise our right to vote!

1. GET REGISTERED:

Make sure you are registered by visiting the Voter Registration section of your Union's website. The deadline to register for the 2014 general election is October 27 for in-person registration.

2. GET INFORMED:

Check out your Union's political

endorsements by visiting www.teamsters117.org. Teamster members engage candidates in a thorough interview process. We endorse only those candidates who publicly commit to support working family issues.

3. VOTE!

In Washington State, ballots are mailed to voters 20 days prior to each election in which they are eligible to vote. Ballots for the 2014 election must be postmarked by November 4.

4. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Prior to the election, we will be organizing

a number of voter outreach activities in support of candidates and issues in targeted areas. If you would like to volunteer, contact Political Coordinator Dustin Lambro at 206-441-4860 ext. 1262.

As a Union member, your vote has a direct impact on your livelihood. Your Union has made its choice. Now, it's your turn. Whatever you decide, make sure to get your ballot in the mail by November 4! ●



22nd Annual Teamsters BLOOD DRIVE



November 15, 2014

8 A.M. to 2 P.M.

Teamsters Local 117

14675 Interurban Ave S. Tukwila

It is that time of year for our Teamsters Local 117 Annual Blood Drive event! This year the event will be held on Saturday, November 15 here at the Union hall in Tukwila (14675 Interurban Ave. S) from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

ALL DONORS will receive a \$25 Safeway gift card! So bring your family, co-workers and friends! If you don't live in the area – have no fear! Any donations made between November 8 and November 22 will be rewarded with a \$25 Safeway gift card as well (just mail in the proof of donation to the Union Hall).

Members on a Teamsters medical plan (WTWT) will also have an opportunity to get a free flu shot on the day of the Blood Drive. If you are not on a Teamster plan, you can get your flu shot for \$30.

Thank you for helping your Union support area blood banks. Your donation gives the gift of life! ●

Find a comprehensive list of election resources at www.teamsters117.org, including:

- **Endorsements** - who our Union has endorsed for elected office
- **Endorsement Process** - FAQs about how we make our endorsements
- **Election Activities** - all our upcoming voter contact activities to help elect those candidates who support our positions on the above issues.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

November 4, 2014 - Election deadline - Get your ballot in the mail!

November 15, 2014 - Local 117 Blood Drive

December 18, 2014 - Holiday Membership Meeting

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](https://twitter.com/teamsters117).