TACOMA LIBRARIANS SEEK RETIREMENT SECURITY

Local 117 members voice their support for librarians at the City of Tacoma

Working people are more concerned than ever about whether they will have enough money saved to enjoy a secure retirement.

With the median savings hovering around $12,000 for people 10 years away from retirement, we have good reason to be concerned.

Teamsters at the City of Tacoma Public Library are aware of this problem and they are taking it seriously. They want the ability to divert some of their own wages into the supplemental Teamsters pension.

It’s a smart idea and would help ensure a smooth transition into retirement. When workers store more of their hard earned money away, they will have greater security for themselves and their families later on in life.

The trouble is – the City of Tacoma is trying to block the librarians’ request. Even though several other groups at the City have the Teamsters pension in their contracts, the City doesn’t want librarians to enjoy the same right.

Local 117 members have supported Tacoma librarians by emailing the City Council and the Tacoma Library Board and telling them to do the right thing: Allow Tacoma librarians the ability to divert their own money into the Teamsters supplemental pension so that they can build a more secure retirement for themselves and their families.

Save the Date!

HOLIDAY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

December 17, 2015 • 7 P.M.

Teamsters Local 117
14675 Interurban Ave S. Tukwila

On Dec. 17, we will be gathering together at the Union hall in Tukwila for solidarity and our annual raffle drawing. Dozens of prizes will be awarded this year. Please join us!

Look who’s Bargaining in the South Sound?

✓ City of Lakewood - CSOs
✓ City of Tacoma - General Unit
✓ Pierce County - General Unit
✓ Pierce County Sheriff’s Dept.
✓ Tacoma Public Library
✓ South Sound 911
A Message from your Secretary-Treasurer

Brothers and Sisters:

As your new Secretary-Treasurer, I am honored and humbled to serve this Union that I love. As we look ahead at the many challenges that working families face, I wanted to share with you some of my personal experiences and my vision for the future of the labor movement and for Teamsters Local 117.

I grew up in a working-class neighborhood on Tacoma’s eastside where many families, including mine, struggled to get by. My mother struggled to raise two boys as a single mom until she got a Union job working in the mailroom at the City of Tacoma, while my father was a switchman for the Burlington Northern Railroad. Both of my parents served as Shop Stewards of their Unions.

My brother and I came to understand that for families like ours, the only way to achieve any kind of financial security was through Union employment. I went to work as an Order Selector, first at SuperValu, and then at Food Services of America, and have been a member of Teamsters Local 117 for 23 years. My brother is a Teamster 117 member of 17 years. Both my brother and I are raising our families in good, safe neighborhoods and teaching our children the importance of understanding their responsibilities to our community.

But my understanding of the power of the Union didn't happen overnight - it took me several years and a few hard knocks to realize the true value of being a Teamster. As a young single father with full custody of two girls, my oldest daughter was born with a chronic medical condition that required expensive, ongoing treatment. Nearly the entire cost of that treatment was covered, thanks to the health and welfare coverage in my Union contract. It was a contract that thousands of Local 117 members - proud, hardworking women and men who came before me - risked their livelihoods to achieve.

That understanding - that the power of the Union lies with the members - has stuck with me and shaped my vision for our Local and the labor movement as a whole. To be strong, to achieve the kinds of fair wages and good benefits that we strive for, our Union cannot merely rely on a small group of committed staff who operate out of a building in Tukwila. To be strong, members must take the lead, get engaged in their Union, and stand up for working families.

Getting involved is not easy. It requires a commitment of time, energy, and passion. It means showing up to membership meetings, participating in Union events, giving back to the community, and standing alongside all workers - even those in other industries - who are struggling for dignity and respect.

But if we, as members of Teamsters 117, are able to rise up together and unite around a common purpose – that there is an inalienable right for people who work hard and play by the rules to a safe, prosperous, and secure life for themselves and their families - we can build a strong and vibrant labor movement and we will change the world....again!

In Solidarity,

John Scearcy
Secretary-Treasurer
HEALTH DEPT. COUNSELORS: HELPING TO REBUILD LIVES

Julie Yust is a Shop Steward and Drug Addiction Treatment Counselor at the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department. She provides counseling services for opiate dependent individuals. Opiates are the fastest growing drug of dependency in the United States. Julie says that the largest growing addict population is kids 18-24 years old who are getting hooked on pain pills.

1. Talk about your work at the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department.
I work with opiate dependent individuals seeking recovery services. We take away those cravings through medication and along with the medication we provide counseling.

2. How can you assist someone who has substance abuse issues?
We work with them to reduce cravings, to stop usage, to change behaviors, and to establish support networks. Every person gets individualized service. They progress through treatment with the ultimate goal of working themselves off methadone and into a drug-free life.

3. What should a family member do if a loved one has substance abuse issues?
Often the biggest thing we see family members do is to continue to assist the person in staying sick. They don’t want to hurt the person any more than they are already hurting so they continue to fund their addictions. People should also provide emotional support, but that doesn’t mean co-dependency and allowing them to sponge off of you forever.

4. What’s the most rewarding part of your job?
I love it when someone is successful and starts their life over. We see folks become successful in their communities, they get back involved in their kids’ lives, or their own lives, or their families. We have folks who start their own businesses. They become active in their own world again.

5. What does it mean to be a Teamster?
It means I’m never alone. Every time I’m out in the community, I see someone with a Teamsters bumper sticker or a Teamsters hat or a Teamsters t-shirt. Or I talk to someone and I say, ‘Yeah, I’m a member of the Teamsters,’ and they tell me about how their grandparents were union members. That solidarity crosses so many boundaries and barriers. It’s about building community.

6. How can we build a stronger union?
Get involved. As a Shop Steward, I’m talking the flag and I’m running with it. I would challenge everyone to do the same. The strength of the Union is its members. The members being active is where that voice comes from. If we’re not showing up, if we’re not supporting each other, why are we in the Union? We may as well be sitting home, watching Jerry Springer.

Event Raises Over $3,000 for our Union’s Adult Education Scholarship

Car & Bike Show Was a Hit!

Classic car, hot rod, and bike aficionados gathered outside the Union hall for our 3rd annual Teamsters Car & Bike Show, held on June 20. With over 70 entries (double last year’s number), the event was a huge success!

We raised over $3,000 for our Local 117 Solidarity Scholarship that helps Local 117 members further their education. Learn more about the scholarship at www.Teamsters117.org.

Thanks to our Comite Latino Caucus for grilling up savory tacos and to our Pacific Northwest Black Caucus for their delicious burgers, dogs, and ribs.
TEAMSTERS DONATE BACK-TO-SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Your Union, Teamsters Local 117, is Giving Back to the Community!

In the month August, members of Teamsters 117 donated several trunk loads of school supplies for kids headed back to school.

The Back-To-School Drive was sponsored by the Teamsters Pacific Northwest Black Caucus. Members were able to donate in their shops or at an event held on August 22.

Donations were made to groups in both King and Pierce counties.

“You’re awesome! We never expected this much in supplies,” said a representative from the Rotary Boys and Girls Club in a voicemail. “This is going to serve at least 1500 kids, so thank you so much!”

Thanks to everyone who donated. Your contributions will ensure that more kids in our communities can return to school well-equipped and ready to learn!

BUS. REP. RYAN JARMAN DELIVER THE GOODS.

WHAT DO TEAMSTERS LOOK LIKE? We look like hardworking, strong, essential members of our communities. We’ll be highlighting Teamster 117 members every few days over the next few months – the best way to stay updated is to like our new Facebook page.  Ready to recognize a fellow Teamster? Visit www.WhatTeamstersLookLike.org and nominate a co-worker today!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Nov. 5, 2015 - Election Day
Nov. 14, 2015 - Local 117 Blood Drive
Dec. 17, 2015 - New Initiates Meeting
Dec. 17, 2015 - Holiday Membership Meeting

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.

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!