



THE

GUARDIAN

NEWS FROM THE HARDWORKING TEAMSTERS OF DOC



SPRING 2016



YOUR 2016 DOC BARGAINING TEAM

Bargaining Update

Bargaining Now Underway

Language issues were at the heart of our first DOC bargaining session on April 26 at your Teamsters Hall in Tukwila. In our opening statement, lead negotiator Michelle Woodrow stressed the importance of good faith bargaining, staff safety, and the need to equitably recognize the outstanding work you perform keeping our communities safe.

The State did not respond to our initial proposal.

We anticipate the State will present their language proposals in our next meetings, which are scheduled for **May 23-24 in Olympia.**

Your Bargaining Team

Sandra Conner, ARNP - AHCC
Greg Starr, CO2 - AHCC
Jeremy Sheldon, SE1 - CBCC
Julie Brown, CRT1 - CRCC
Levi Dean, CO2 - CRCC
Shawn Piliponis, CC2 - LCC
Lynn Kunkle, RN2 - MCC
James Palmer, SGT - MCC
Lance Rogers, CO2 - MCC
Alena Folson-McGowan, AC Cook - MCCCW
Jon Gortmaker, Pharm Asst. - ML Pharm
Richard Mate, SGT - OCC
Gregg Peterson, CO2 - SCCC
Mel Coplin, Phych Assoc - SCCC
Larry Reeves, SGT - WCC
Mike Delgado, SGT - WCCW
Chris Malone, SGT - WSP
Scott Nettles, CO2 - WSP

A MESSAGE FROM MICHELLE WOODROW

YOUR PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR OF CORRECTIONS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Thank You for Your Service

The first week in May is National Correctional Employees Week. This is a time to honor all of you - our heroes who work in the field of corrections.

The work you do is varied, but you share a common purpose.

You supervise, care for, and help rehabilitate some of society's most violent offenders. You help protect our community, sacrificing your own safety for all of us.

No amount of gratitude can match the sacrifice you endure through your service.

You perform heroic work, but often

receive little recognition for the critical public safety service you provide.

The state owes it to you to ensure staffing levels in the prisons are adequate. We must also work to revamp the current retirement system, and make sure you are paid equitably.

Most people will never see the inside of a prison. Their exposure to life behind prison walls is limited to what they watch on television.

For all of them, we express our profound gratitude to all of you for putting your lives on the line to keep us safe.

TEAMSTERS LOCAL 117

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**Thank you for your membership
in Teamsters Local 117**



Building Solidarity Between Industries

After DOC bargaining on April 26, I had the incredible experience of visiting a couple of our grocery warehouses with rank-in-file leaders from the Department of Corrections.

Our group, which included Shop Stewards from WSP, CBCC, and LCC, walked the floor at the SuperValu warehouse in Tacoma and at our Safeway produce shop in Auburn.

My hope was that Teamsters from different industries could connect, learn from each other, and share experiences. And that's exactly what happened.

The DOC members learned about the challenges of working under a

tight production standard. Our grocery members heard what it's like to work inside a prison.

Most importantly, both groups pledged to support each other.

Our grocery members promised to call the legislature, when the time comes, to support funding the DOC contract. Our grocery members learned that they have strong allies at the DOC should they run into trouble securing their own contracts.

"This was a great experience," said Jeremy Sheldon of CBCC. "It shows the solidarity as far as public and private sector realizing the struggles that we both have - and that we've got each

others' backs."

Thank you to our DOC members who participated in this visit after a long day at the bargaining table. And thank you for your membership in Teamsters Local 117.

In Solidarity,

John Searcy,
Secretary-Treasurer



RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ISSUE AWAITS DECISION

A hearing was held on March 24 to determine whether the DOC violated our collective bargaining agreement and/or the arbitrator's decision in the interest arbitration case when they eliminated assignment pay last July at CRCC, MCC, and WSP. We argued that the DOC's decision was arbitrary and capricious and simply implemented because of cost.

A decision from the arbitrator is expected this month.

Thank you for your patience as this plays out. We will update you when a decision is made.



A DAY IN OLYMPIA

MCC Member Walks In the Shoes of a Lobbyist

When Paul Moore left his Shop Steward role at the Washington State Penitentiary and was promoted into a new position across the state, he vowed not to let his union activism fall by the wayside. "I wanted to continue to make the union a priority," he said.

Moore, who now supervises a team of nurses at the Monroe Correctional Complex (MCC), cares deeply about his staff and sees the union as a way to advocate for them. "We have unique problems at MCC – problems with staffing and problems keeping good nurses. It comes down to morale and pay. Our nurses are paid a lot less than they should be," he said.

Moore took these issues and a host of other concerns with him to our DOC lobby day event back in January.

Impressed by the impact he and his co-workers were having, he reached out to our Teamsters legislative director, Brenda Wiest, and told her he wanted to do more. She suggested that he return to Olympia and shadow her for a day.

Moore thought this was a great idea. He would be able to deepen his knowledge of the political process and further advocate for issues critical to Teamsters at the DOC.

A few weeks later, Moore met up with Wiest at the State Labor Council offices in Olympia.

He started the day at a roundtable discussion with other labor advocates before heading to the Capitol to seek out his legislators. As is often the case, they were busy in hearings that morning. Wiest helped Moore pull them off the floor for quick conversations.

Intimidated at first, Moore quickly realized that his legislators were open and willing to listen. "I had a chance to speak with Senator Kirk Pearson (R-Monroe) and I was very impressed," he said. Moore and Senator Pearson discussed nursing and the assault benefits bill that the union had helped put forth.

"Every time I go to Olympia, I feel like I've been a little more effective and made a little more of an impact. That's what it's all about - making sure our voices are heard. We're not asking for anything unreasonable. We just want fair pay, fair working conditions, and a little respect," he said.

■ **Local 117 is proud to celebrate National Nurses Week (May 6-12) to honor the exceptional work done by our nurses at the DOC. Thank a nurse today!**

Lessons From Bargaining

by Sgt. Michael Delgado

This year I was given the opportunity to be part of the statewide negotiations team for Local 117 – an interesting experience to say the least.

On April 25, we had the first of a two-day session with several more to come over the next few months.

The first day was fun and educational. I saw firsthand the work we put into bargaining. I was able to visit with members from facilities around the state— some really good folks. I heard a variety of perspectives, and some of the same concerns and issues we have all faced in our chosen profession. I must admit, it was quite enlightening. Hearing the commonalities of issues is of concern to me, and should be for you as well. But, that's why we're here.

The second day, was different. We had a "formal" meet and greet with DOC management. There were actually a few on the "other side" that used to work for me. It was good to see them. After introductions, we provided them with our initial proposals for their review.

It was weird in the sense that you could feel this "it's them against us or us against them" vibe even though we all work for the same agency. Perhaps that's just my inexperience talking, but I always go with my gut.

With all that said, I'll leave you with this: The Department prides itself on its motto that "staff are their most valued asset". If that's true, then I for one intend on holding them to that standard. Hopefully, they will demonstrate that throughout these negotiations over the next few months.

For bargaining updates be sure to check Teamsters117.org.

Michael Delgado

is a Sergeant at the Washington Corrections Center for Women. He has been with the Department for 35 years.





HOT DOG FRIDAY BRINGS WCCW TOGETHER

At WCCW, everybody knows about hot dog Friday. Every Friday, a 30-year DOC vet named Henry Torres brings in tortillas, buns, 60-70 franks, and the "best damn salsa in the world."

He cooks for everyone on staff, all the way up to the superintendent. Sometimes he likes to embellish, by bringing in a pork shoulder for variety. And to top it off, he pays for everything out of his own pocket.

"He's one of the wisest guys here – a leader at this institution," said longtime Shop Steward, Sgt. Michael Delgado.

Henry has had an epic career in public service. He was drafted into the

Army in 1966, served two tours of duty in Vietnam, one in Granada, and one in Panama.

All told, he served 22 years in the military. Add that to his three decades as a corrections officer and that's quite a remarkable run.

In his spare time, Henry, aka Officer Torres, looks after his four grandchildren and volunteers in the Watchdog program at an elementary school in Lacey where he mentors kids and educates them on the dangers of bullying.

At WCCW, Henry is an institution unto himself, the embodiment of a true unionist. He is a wealth of knowledge, experience and compassion. He looks after his co-workers, making sure that everyone is safe and that, on Fridays, their stomachs are full.

Thank you for your service, Henry. We salute you.

VOICES OF DOC WCCW

For more photos, visit our facebook page: fb.com/TeamstersLocal117



“United we stand, divided we fall. If management can build a wedge between us, we will fail.”

Officer Noelle Guenette
CO2, WCCW



“I feel supported through the union.”

Officer Kay Young
CO2, WCCW

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

MAY

1-7 - National Correctional Employees Week
6-12 - National Nurses Week
22 - Veterans Caucus Meeting
9A - Tukwila

JUNE

16 - Membership Meeting
7P - Teamsters Hall -Tukwila
18 - Teamsters Car and Bike Show
9:30A - Teamsters Hall -Tukwila

DOC NEGOTIATIONS

May 23-24 - Olympia
June 9-10 - Tukwila
June 20-21 - Olympia
July 7-8 - Tukwila

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