



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

By Andrea Canini

TEAMSTER WOMEN MAKING WAVES!

Newly-Energized Women's Caucus Leads Recent Volunteer Efforts



Local 117 members volunteering at the Emergency Food Network's warehouse in Lakewood

Over the past several months, Teamster women and their families have been giving back to our communities in meaningful ways.

Through volunteer events sponsored by our newly-organized **Women's Caucus**, Teamsters spent a Saturday in May helping out at the **Emergency Food Network's** (EFN) Mother Earth Farm near Puyallup, and another Saturday in June working at the EFN warehouse in Lakewood.

EFN'S MOTHER EARTH FARM

At the **Mother Earth Farm**, our Teamster crew spent the afternoon pulling weeds and installing a new irrigation system for the EFN's **Farm-to-Table Program** that provides

fresh, organic food to individuals and families in need in Pierce County.

The folks that run the farm praised our efforts, saying that our group was one of the most productive they've seen in a while.

The experience allowed volunteers like **Freda Cogger**, a Local 117 Teamster at Workforce Central, a chance to reflect—



Local 117 members at the EFN Mother Earth Farm

"I realized how I am part of the bigger picture of helping those who need a little help to get access to fresh vegetables and fruit," she said.

SORTING APPLES: THE BAD FROM THE GOOD

A few weeks later, on a sunny Saturday in June, over a dozen Teamsters and their families spent another afternoon volunteering at the EFN warehouse in Lakewood. The crew sorted 16,000 lbs of apples for the organization's **Repack Project**, which helps prepare bulk food for distribution to food banks in Pierce County.

After participating in the second event, Cogger shared her thoughts—

"Being a Teamster should mean more than paying dues. It should mean doing something to demonstrate Union solidarity. There's the stereotype that Union folks are lazy. I need to be an example that that's not true—in my Union and at work. What better way to do it than becoming more involved in my Union's activities and events?"

A BENEFIT OR CAUSE NEAR YOU?

If you know a community organization or cause that needs a helping hand, let your Business Rep or Shop Steward know, so we can continue to show our communities that Teamsters are giving back!

For more information about the Teamsters Women's Caucus, contact Dawn Gearhart at 206-441-4860 ext.1254 or visit www.teamsters117.org.



Sorting apples - helping to fight hunger!

A Message from your Secretary-Treasurer



John Searcy

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 Searcy
Secretary-Treasurer

By William Canon, Shop Steward

MEMBER REFLECTS ON SUMMIT FOR YOUNG LABOR LEADERS

Next Up Summit is an eye opener



William Cannon

Recently I had the opportunity to attend the **Next Up Summit** in Chicago organized by the AFL-CIO. What I saw there was both uplifting and thought-provoking.

For one, right-to-work (for less) and its negative effect has created challenges for our union brothers and sisters around the country.

However, what is more powerful is the work being done by emerging leaders in the labor movement.

I saw and heard stories from many people about work they're doing to strengthen their union, to promote equality, and to make sure that workers' rights are being respected in all 50 states.

I left the summit with several things. For one, we need to encourage people with union jobs to be more active in order to ensure that right-to-work never becomes a reality in Washington State.

Secondly, there is a vibrancy in youth around this nation in fighting for both their rights as well as the rights of their children in the future. Lastly, I myself was inspired by all the possibilities that lie ahead of us in strengthening Teamsters 117.

Working together with other young labor leaders was an experience that I will not forget.

There was a level of motivation and excitement I had not foreseen. Now that I know what is happening all over the country, I am sure that the strength of our union will continue to grow and grow as long as young people are allowed to express their voice and bring to the table their ideas, perspective, and energy. ●

William Cannon is a Local 117 Shop Steward who works at the Washington State Penitentiary in Walla Walla.

APP-BASED DRIVERS EXPAND ASSOCIATION, DEMAND RESPECT

Teamster TNCs are getting organized and demanding a voice



Hussein Farah addresses fellow drivers on May 5.

Limousine and app-based drivers packed our Teamsters Union hall on May 5 to demand fairness and a level playing field in Seattle's personal transportation industry.

The event comes just under a year after

the founding of our **App-Based Drivers' Association** last May.

"We need an association so we can have a voice, unity, and respect," said Hussein Farah, as he addressed limousine drivers and other app-based drivers from Uber, Uber X, Lyft, and Sidecar. "This unity for the association helps us protect our rights."

Drivers were joined at the event by community and elected leaders, including members of the King County Council, and the Seattle City Council, as well as representatives from the Ethiopian and Sudanese community centers.

"My job as a city councilmember is to make sure that drivers are treated fairly," said Seattle City Councilmember **Mike O'Brien**.

At the event, drivers voted to approve by-laws for the association, and they elected a 13-member leadership council for the coming year. The association aims to promote fairness, justice, and transparency in the industry while ensuring driver and public safety.

Over the last several months, hundreds of drivers have attended meetings at the Teamsters Union to discuss these issues. Drivers initially sought our support after Uber cut the drivers' pay by 15% in February. The company ultimately reversed the rate cut after drivers demanded that Uber fully restore the previous rate.

"We stand together with app-based drivers as they organize for better working conditions and fair pay," said John Scearcy, Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 117. "As Teamsters, we know that workers who are being exploited can take on \$40 billion companies like Uber and win. **Because as Teamsters, when we fight, we win.**" ●

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

Teamsters Car & Bike Show Was a Blast!



Victor Porras of Republic Services took home 1st Prize in the Truck Category

Classic car, hot rod, and bike aficionados gathered outside their 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!

In total, we raised over \$3,000 for our **Local 117 Solidarity Scholarship** that helps Local 117 members further their education. You can 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. **We'll see you again next year!** ●



TEAMSTER PEANUT BUTTER!

Massive Donation Benefits Hungry Kids in Pierce County



Field Coordinator Matt House and IT Director Anarudh Prasad deliver the goods!

Hungry kids in **Pierce County** will have a little more PB & J material this year thanks to our Union's incredible 406-jar contribution to the **Pierce County Central Labor Council's** peanut butter drive.

Our donation will benefit the **Emergency Food Network's Backpack Program**, an initiative that allows kids who don't have access to food over the weekend to prepare healthy meals for themselves.

Special thanks to the hundreds of members of Teamsters 117 who chipped in a jar or two to help fight hunger! ●

117 Soccer Journey

Aug. 22 - Tukwila

Let's build some Teamster solidarity by participating in our friendly, 6 vs 6 **Soccer Tournament** to be held on Saturday, August 22, at Joseph Memorial Park in Tukwila.

This year we'll be celebrating our 5th year with teams from across our Union. Space is limited, so register now!

For more info, call 206-794-6673. ●



WhatTeamstersLookLike.org



WHAT DO TEAMSTERS LOOK LIKE?

We look like hardworking, strong, essential members of our communities. Ready to recognize a fellow Teamster?

Visit WhatTeamstersLookLike.org and nominate a co-worker today!

What does a Local 117 Teamster look like? We look like hard working, strong, essential members of our communities.

Like **James Borum**, a truck driver for Sysco, who raised money to help a co-worker buy cancer treatment equipment.

Like **Cid Avellaneda**, a USB route salesman, who came here from Peru and now fosters needy children from other countries and takes his family on missions to orphanages.

Like **Silvia Washington**, who came here from Germany, adopted and raised 4 children on her own, and who now trains sled dogs when she's not busy working for the Department of Corrections.

What Teamsters Look Like is new campaign to recognize Teamsters who go that extra mile at work, who help out fellow employees, or who give back to the community.

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? Nominate a co-worker today!**

LOCAL 117 EVENTS - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Aug. 22, 2015 - Teamsters 6 vs. 6 Soccer Tournament

Aug. 22, 2015 - PNBC Blood Drive and Back-To-School Drive

Sept. 17, 2015 - Quarterly Membership Meeting

Sept. 19, 2015 - New Steward Training

TEAMSTERS 117 ON THE WEB!



Visit your Union's new website at www.teamsters117.org. Join your Union's Facebook page, follow us on Twitter @teamsters117, and watch Local 117 videos on YouTube!

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