



# MOVE

Illinois Council 31—American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees—AFL-CIO

## Is Illinois the next Wisconsin?



## AFSCME members say NO WAY!

See pages 8-10

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**On the Move**

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Dolores Wilber, Designer

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**A FAREWELL MESSAGE**

**A union built to last**

*Henry Bayer looks back on his time as Executive Director – and at the challenges ahead*



**BY HENRY BAYER**

**THE DAYS AHEAD WON'T BE EASY, BUT IT WASN'T EASY FOR THOSE WHO MADE THE DREAM OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING A REALITY.**

**I** write this, my last column, as I step down as Executive Director after 21 years.

WHEN I BECAME AN AFSCME MEMBER 39 YEARS AGO, ILLINOIS PUBLIC EMPLOYEES DID NOT YET have full collective bargaining rights. Only a relative handful of local government and university workers were covered by limited collective bargaining agreements that, without a comprehensive bargaining law, were weakly enforced.

Our International Union was leading an effort to enact bargaining laws across the country, which in Illinois led first to an Executive Order for state employees, then a comprehensive law covering hundreds of thousands of public workers.

Those measures were won only after AFSCME members worked their tails off in 1972 to elect an independent-minded governor committed to bargaining rights. They worked equally hard in 1983 to elect a mayor of Chicago willing to buck a political machine whose reach enabled it to block public employee bargaining rights for two decades. Elections have consequences.

In these battles we stood virtually alone. We had few members and less money, but our AFSCME brothers and sisters in states where public sector bargaining was thriving understood that organizing the unorganized here would make their own unions stronger.

Thanks to their dollars and the determination of a dedicated band of Illinois members, we won the rights we had so long sought and built a powerful union.

Members play a uniquely active role in the life of our union. Where else do you find rank and file union officers willing to put in countless hours representing, educating and mobilizing their co-workers without compensation?

Where else do you find so many members willing to hit the picket line, or hop on a bus to a village hall, county building, or the state capitol?

It is from you that the union derives its strength, a strength constantly tested by powerful forces that want to crush us and undo our gains.

The days ahead won't be easy, but it wasn't easy for those who made the dream of collective bargaining a reality. If they, with their meager resources, could unlock the chokehold that conservative Republicans and the Chicago political machine had on public employees, we can beat back attacks from today's corporate elite.

Council 31 can point to many accomplishments since winning bargaining rights in 1983. There's a reason why we are the flagship Council in the number one union.

We've not squabbled a lot internally. Locals where members spend time fighting one another – doing themselves a disservice – are a distinct minority. Our Council has had a unity of purpose since its inception.

We can be proud that we recognized early on that we all suffered from a shrinking labor movement, making a strong organizing program imperative.

We can be proud that we led the fight to improve pension benefits in Illinois – ensuring economic security for retirees – and spearheaded legal and legislative battles to preserve those benefits.

We can be proud that, when challenged by our enemies, we have been willing to invest the resources necessary to do battle. Unlike too many politicians, we've not claimed we can do more with less. We know from our own work

experience that when we lack resources or staff, services suffer.

We can be proud that when AFSCME members in Illinois have found it necessary to strike, we were able to support them with strike benefits from our Solidarity Fund, including our beleaguered members at Heartland Human Services in Effingham, who never wavered during two years on the picket line.

We can be proud that we have a staff that is second to none in the entire labor movement, who regard their work not simply as a job, but as a calling to empower members and bring justice to the workplace and communities.

These things started before I became the Director and all of them and more, I am confident, will continue under my successor, Roberta Lynch, whose enormous contributions to the growth and development of the Council cannot be overstated.

I couldn't be leaving the union in better hands, but Roberta would be the first one to tell you that her hands alone won't get the job done. It's going to take the hands of all 100,000 active and retired members clasped together, moving with the same unity and determination which has made Council 31 the great union that it is today.

The most immediate job is to ensure that Bruce Rauner, who thinks collective bargaining is "bribery" and that our wages and benefits are too high, doesn't become governor. In this effort, my hands will be one pair of what I hope will be all 100,000 of yours.

I am grateful to all of you who have contributed to the greatness of this union of which I am so proud to have been a part. I thank you for your years of support and hope to see you on the campaign trail in the coming weeks.

# A conversation with Executive Director Roberta Lynch

**E**ditor's Note: On June 26, Henry Bayer announced he was stepping down as executive director of Council 31. Acting on its constitutional authority, the Council 31 Executive Board elected longtime Deputy Director Roberta Lynch to complete Bayer's unexpired term. Shortly after being sworn in on Aug. 1, Lynch spoke with *On the Move* about the challenges and opportunities facing the union.



**OTM:** You are taking the reins at Council 31 at a critical time. Bruce Rauner has made attacks on public employee unions a centerpiece of his campaign and cases like *Harris v. Quinn* show bringing down unions is a priority for the corporate elite. How will Council 31 respond to these challenges?

One thing is certain: The assaults are intensifying, so our response has to as well. There's never been a candidate in Illinois politics as viciously anti-union as Bruce Rauner. Here's a corporate honcho who violated just about every ethical standard imaginable, yet has the gall to put a blanket label of "corrupt" on every public employee in this state.

You only have to look at our neighbors to the north in Wisconsin to know how real a threat Rauner poses. In just two years Republican Gov. Scott Walker obliterated union rights for public employees in that state. And Rauner cites Walker as one of his role models.

The good news is that so far we have nearly 2,000 member volunteers who've signed up to be part of the Union Defense Team in order to put the brakes on Rauner's union-destruction campaign. We've never seen that kind of grassroots interest in any election that I can recall. Now we've got to translate that interest into action.

The not-as-good news is that we've still got too many members who don't seem to realize that Rauner is deadly serious about taking away their union rights. They're understandably frustrated with the Democrats we've had to battle in recent years. But they haven't absorbed the big lesson of Wisconsin: That as long as we have our union we can continue to fight.

We've also got to keep in mind that Rauner isn't just some renegade crackpot. He's part of a growing nationwide network of hugely wealthy individuals who are determined to keep working people down and silence our voices. They fund groups like ALEC to push through anti-union laws state-by-state, as well as groups like the National Right to Work Foundation to pursue anti-union lawsuits like *Harris v. Quinn*. The uber-rich Koch Brothers are the personification of this dangerous new oligarchs club.

To respond to that kind of organized money, we're going to have to become even better organized at the grassroots. We've been working for several years now to set up Member Action Teams in all our locals so that we can be sure that every member is informed and engaged. The teams have played a big role in a number of key battles over the past two years. But we still have quite a few locals that don't have MATs in place, so that will be a top priority for us going forward.

**OTM:** What are the biggest challenges AFSCME will face here in Illinois over the next 2-3 years?

Of course, a lot depends on who becomes governor. But let's just talk generally for the moment. Unfortunately, we can be certain that the attacks on pension benefits will continue. The pension underfunding problem is real and there are few politicians in either party who want to seriously grapple with developing a fair solution.

Over two years ago, when the assault began in earnest, AFSCME took the lead in helping to form the We Are One Illinois coalition, which brought together all the public sector unions. Through

our coalition, we were able to help shape public opinion, countering the lies promulgated by corporate elites. Over the course of those two years, We Are One carried out the most massive grassroots lobbying campaign that was ever seen at the State Capitol.

When the pension-cutters finally succeeded in pushing through their bill last spring, our coalition went to court to overturn the law. A recent Illinois Supreme Court decision in another AFSCME legal challenge – this one over cuts to retiree health care benefits – provided a boost for our argument that pension benefits are protected by the state constitution.

We'll probably be fighting the pension battle in court for at least another year – and in the court of public opinion for even longer. If we succeed in overturning the laws that cut pension benefits, you can be sure that big business will make a concerted effort to repeal the constitution's pension protection clause.

Another major issue confronting AFSCME members all across Illinois is the shortfall in public budgets – which is a function partly of the slowness of the national economic recovery, but more basically, of the unwillingness of politicians to be honest with voters about the need to restructure our tax system to make it fairer by requiring those with big incomes to pay more than people of moderate means.

Many of the other problems we face – privatization, layoffs, facility closures, fierce contract battles – stem from the stark reality that most units of government, and especially state government, are woefully short of the revenues needed to meet the needs of their citizens. And they're short because the rich are not paying their fair

share.

At the state level that's due to the constitutional prohibition against a graduated income tax. Last year AFSCME worked to put a referendum on the ballot that would allow voters to decide whether to repeal that provision and establish a fairer tax system. But the measure couldn't get the super-majority of the General Assembly needed to put it on the ballot.

We're not going to give up on that or on other proposals to address budgetary woes, including extending the state income tax rates that are currently in place. If we don't make progress on that core issue, then we'll continue to face downward pressure on wages, as well as the threat of layoffs and closures.

**OTM:** Poll after poll shows people agree with unions on issues like retirement security and income inequality, yet politicians continue to push the corporate agenda. How can the union help turn the tide?

Well, first of all, I think it's important to take note of those polls. You have to keep in mind the massive amounts of money that have been spent by corporate elites to attack and besmirch unions, public employees, and pensions in our state. Yet throughout the big pension battles, polls consistently showed that a majority of our fellow citizens did NOT favor cutting the pensions of public employees. I think that shows that all the efforts to stir up resentments against public employees aren't really working. Most people recognize that public employees – correctional officers, caregivers to those who are sick or elderly, teachers, first responders, and so many others – are doing difficult, sometimes dangerous jobs and deserve to be treated fairly.

Politicians continue to push the corporate agenda for one reason – big bucks. The Supreme Court's *Citizens United* ruling has unleashed a deluge of dollars into the campaign coffers of politi-

cians of both parties from big business contributors. Our PEOPLE program in AFSCME is a counterweight to all that corporate money. Council 31 has been a leader in PEOPLE contributions and that's enabled us to help those politicians who refuse to bow down to corporate power. Unfortunately, there just aren't enough of those folks in office now.

That's why it's going to be increasingly important for us to "grow" our own elected officials, people like State Representative Mike Smiddy, an AFSCME member from the East Moline Correctional Center, who we know can be counted on to stand up for what's right. But to do that will require that we increase both our grassroots involvement in politics and our financial involvement. We need more folks willing to come out and help those candidates who stand with us – and more participants in our PEOPLE MVP program so that we can provide funding to those candidates.

**OTM:** Despite constant attacks, the union has continued to organize new members. What will organizing efforts look like going forward?

We can't just stand still. Growth is essential to any dynamic organization – and Council 31 is known for its dynamism. We were among the first affiliates in AFSCME to recognize that we had to "follow the work" when employers privatized public services. We made major strides in bringing low-wage, marginalized workers in non-profit community disability

agencies into the AFSCME family, making significant improvements in their wages and work-

ing conditions. And when the state privatized health services in its prison system, AFSCME did the same for employees of the health care vendors.

Now we're charting new territory again as we work to build an organization of taxicab drivers in Chicago. The drivers are technically employed by pri-

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# Despite setback, Murray Center employees remain determined

The two-year long effort to prevent the closure of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia was dealt a setback in July when a federal judge lifted an injunction that has kept the facility open over the state's objections.

WITH THE INJUNCTION LIFTED, THE STATE IS NOW FREE TO BEGIN MOVING OUT THE PEOPLE with developmental disabilities who call Murray Center home.

However, the Department of Human Services has said it expects moving residents and closing the facility to be a "long process." Meanwhile, the Murray Parents Association is still weighing whether to appeal Judge Marvin Aspen's decision to allow the closure to move forward.

Amid all this, Murray Center employees have kept their focus on caring for indi-

viduals they see as extended family.

"We're all going to be here until the bitter end," Local 401 President Steve Koppen said. "The people that work here care for these individuals and we're not going to let them go without some input from people who have worked with them for 20 or 30 years."

There's still no guarantee Murray Center will close. If it does, though, the closure will be a better, more humane process than it would have been had employees, parents and the community not worked together to keep the facility open.

When DHS first began to move forward with the closure plan, management insisted there were ample appropriate alternative placements available for residents. But it wasn't long before it became eminently clear that there were not sufficient placements available to meet the special needs of Murray residents.

"In the very beginning, the state said these individuals will have the option to live in a four-bed or less home," Kop-



pen said. "There aren't any group homes around here with four beds or less so the state is going to have to build them."

When the closure was initiated in 2011, staff members were also put under tremendous pressure to move individuals to settings that didn't meet their needs, to remain silent as contractors made inappropriate placements, and to turn over private records to those outsiders without guardian approval.

AFSCME responded by filing a grievance to ensure Murray employees have a voice in all resident place-

ments. After more than a year of hearings before an independent arbitrator and settlement discussions, the grievance was resolved in July with a detailed agreement that clearly affirms the role of Murray Center employees in assuring appropriate placements.

"The social workers that work here will be more involved in the transition of residents," Koppen said.

### What lies ahead

WITH THE INJUNCTION LIFTED, the state will need to seek a closure permit from the

Health Facilities and Services Review Board before moving forward. That panel will meet no earlier than October 7.

"We will be there to make the case against closure," Council 31 public policy director Anne Irving said. "We've fought for what is right for Murray residents for the last two-and-a-half years, and we will keep fighting for what is right."

Murray Center employees are also guaranteed certain protections under the union contract that will help them in finding other positions within DHS and extend health insurance in the event of layoffs.

Koppen said employees know they have union protections and are more concerned about the impact on Murray residents and the surrounding community, which has adopted the cause of keeping the facility open.

"The fight's far from over," he said. "We're here for the individuals and their well-being. Until it's final, whether we stay open or close, our main purpose is to make sure they're well cared for while they're here."

# AFSCME member puts life on the line to keep community safe

Public employees face danger on the job every day, sometimes even putting their lives at risk to protect their communities.

THE LATEST EXAMPLE OF THE SACRIFICES MADE BY PUBLIC SERVICE WORKERS COMES OUT OF Pana, a small town in central Illinois, where Local 726 member Adam Ladage, an officer in the Pana Police Department, was wounded in action while investigating a drug case.

Ladage received a call in the early morning of July 29. Police in nearby Fayette County had been pursuing a

man suspected of illegal weapons use when they entered a residence just outside Pana and found drug paraphernalia. At that point, they called for backup.

Ladage, as a member of the Central Illinois Enforcement Group – a regional task force focused on curbing illegal drug activity – got the call.

When Ladage and his colleague arrived, three people in the home had already been detained, but the home's attic remained unsearched. Ladage and the other inspector cautiously approached the door to the attic.

"As soon as the deputy opened up that door, boom boom, two shots went off," Ladage said.

Ladage retreated downstairs. As other officers rushed in, he volunteered to keep an



eye on the detained suspects, even though he knew he had been struck in the left shoulder.

"It hit me in the shoulder and shattered the top part of the humerus bone," he said. "The arm was dead, limp. I couldn't raise it or anything."

Once other officers came

back downstairs, Ladage knew he had to receive medical care. But when he left the home, he quickly realized the man who shot him was now on the roof.

"I'm looking for cover," he said. "I go behind a car. I held my arm to my side and ran around behind another

vehicle that was further away."

Eventually, another officer pulled up in a vehicle, whisking Ladage away to a nearby parking lot where an ambulance arrived to take him to the hospital. Ladage had a 13-inch plate and eight screws inserted into his shoulder.

### Community support

LADAGE SAID THE COMMUNITY has been incredibly supportive, almost from the moment he was injured.

"Nurses, doctors, family, friends, co-workers, even people I don't know, have been supportive and helpful," he said. "All the way around, it's been amazing."

His local has not only

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# Supreme Court affirms retiree health care benefits

**J**uly's state Supreme Court ruling that strongly affirmed constitutional protections for the health benefits of retired state and state university employees was, without a doubt, a major victory for public employees in Illinois.

BUT WHILE THAT RULING CERTAINLY BODES WELL FOR UNION-BACKED CHALLENGES TO LAWS attacking retirement security for public service workers (including pensions – see other story on this page), final resolutions in these court cases could yet be many months away.

Still, the 6-1 bipartisan ruling made clear that the state Supreme Court accepts what the politicians were will-

ing to ignore: The state constitution provides that retiree benefits cannot be diminished or impaired.

"Public employees and retirees may not be able to put much faith in politicians to do what's right, but thanks to this ruling they can have faith that the Illinois Constitution means what it says," Council 31 Executive Director Roberta Lynch said. "There is still a long road ahead, but having this bedrock principle affirmed gives us plenty of momentum."

## Health care put at risk

THE SUPREME COURT'S RULING, specifically, overturned a decision by a Sangamon County Circuit Court judge to dismiss a lawsuit brought by AFSCME and other unions challenging the constitutionality of Public Act 97-695 (known as SB 1313), which gave the state's Department of Central Management Services the power to set health care premiums

for retirees enrolled in the State Employees Group Health Insurance Plan.

The bill became law in June 2012, with unions suing to have it overturned two months later.

One of the central arguments of the union lawsuit was that since state law provides retirees with access to health insurance in connection with their enrollment in the SERS or SURS pension systems, the law would be in violation of the constitution's pension clause (Article XIII, Section 5).

The six justices in the majority strongly agreed with this, writing an opinion that left little doubt about where they stood.

"For us to hold that such benefits are not among the benefits of membership protected by the constitution would require us to construe article XIII, section 5, in a way that the plain language of the provision does not support," the court wrote. "We may not rewrite the pension protec-

tion clause to include restrictions and limitations that the drafters did not express and the citizens of Illinois did not approve."

The ruling was in keeping with the intentions of those who wrote and approved the state constitution in 1970, Lynch said.

"When the constitution was written by the framers and approved by voters, they wanted to avoid a situation where politicians misspent money and then claimed the state couldn't afford to provide the modest pension retirees earned or affordable health insurance they were promised," she said. "It's a false choice."

## Back to the Circuit Court

DESPITE THE STRONG LANGUAGE used by the Supreme Court, its decision did not "strike down" the law. It only overturned the decision to dismiss the case.

As On the Move went to

press, the case was remanded to the Circuit Court. Lawyers representing AFSCME and other unions are expected to file a motion for "summary judgment," arguing that the Circuit Court should accept the Supreme Court's reasoning and find the law unconstitutional without a lengthy hearing.

The union will also request that the judge order that retiree health care premiums be restored to their previous rate and that all premium increases paid thus far (currently being held in escrow) be returned to retirees.

At press time, it was unclear what position Attorney General Lisa Madigan will take before the circuit court. She may argue against the summary judgment and press for a full hearing – which could take many more months, even years – in order to raise in this case the "police powers" argument on which the state is relying in its defense of pension-cutting SB 1.

# Pension battles still front and center

**I**n the state Supreme Court's recent ruling regarding retiree health care, one sentence in particular stood out.

"UNDER SETTLED ILLINOIS LAW, WHERE THERE IS ANY QUESTION AS TO LEGISLATIVE INTENT AND the clarity of the language of a pension statute, it must be liberally construed in favor of the rights of the pensioner," the court wrote in its opinion.

While that opinion concerned a law dealing with retiree health care benefits, the court's language clearly provided some good news for the AFSCME-backed lawsuit challenging the law that would cut pensions for state government and state university retirees (SB 1–Public Act 98-599).

Preliminary filings in the pension lawsuit, which is now before Judge Belz in Sangamon County Circuit Court, indicate that the state will base its defense of the law on the contention that pension underfunding represents such a dire fiscal emergency that the state must use its "police powers" to override the protections that the constitution affords pension benefits.

Attorneys for the We Are One Illinois union coalition, of which AFSCME is a member, are seeking to narrow the issues before the circuit court in order to move the pension case as quickly as possible to the Supreme Court. However, thus far, Belz has stated he wants to build a full record at the lower court level – a process that could take many months, extending far into 2015.

In light of the health care ruling in June, the union coalition attorneys have

returned to court to ask the judge to reconsider that decision and to allow for a speedier path to the high court.

"We are extremely heartened by the Supreme Court's ruling and its implications for our efforts to overturn unfair, unconstitutional pension cuts," Council 31 Executive Director Roberta Lynch said. "However, the outcome in that case is by no means assured. And, unfortunately, the wheels of justice always turn

slowly – so it may be some time yet before we have a final ruling on this critical issue."

## Pension opponents plan their next attack

SOME OF THOSE WHO SUPPORTED the pension cuts in SB 1 seem to already be plotting their next move, assuming that the law will be struck down.

Unfortunately, instead of seeking compromise with unions, they appear to be considering going well beyond SB 1 – they're floating the idea of repealing the pen-

sion protection clause itself.

"We need that flexibility," Rep. Joseph Sosnowski, R-Rockford, told Crain's Chicago Business. Sosnowski is already planning to re-introduce legislation that would repeal the clause.

While amending the state constitution is extremely difficult, unions are already keeping an eye on this dangerous proposal, which could allow for the complete elimination of pensions.

"There's plenty of more rational, less difficult things we can do than constitutional amendments," Illinois Federation of Teachers President Dan

Montgomery said on Chicago Tonight, a public affairs program on Chicago's PBS affiliate. "We can look at refinancing the long-term debt. That's a sensible thing a lot of rational, middle of the road, bipartisan groups have said."





# Chicago cabdrivers have force of AFSCME behind them



Chicago taxicab driver David Mangum spoke about the challenges of his work.

As Chicago taxicab drivers continue to build power and demand a say in the policies affecting them, they do so knowing they've got plenty of public service workers standing with them.

THAT MUCH WAS CLEAR WHEN, DURING AFSCME'S 41ST INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, THOUSANDS OF DELEGATES PACKED the plaza surrounding downtown Chicago's Thompson Center to rally with cab drivers who are starting to organize after years of being squeezed by escalating fees and fines

handed down by the city. "We are building power to make real change – and we are doing it as AFSCME," said Maxwell Akenten, one of the cab drivers who spoke at the rally. "We will not be divided. We will not be silenced. We will not be stopped." Akenten and nearly 2,000

other taxicab drivers in the city have signed up with Cab Drivers United, a new union affiliated with AFSCME that is making headway in giving cab drivers a united voice in dealing with the politicians who effectively control their working conditions

Cab Drivers United is already making demands of the city's Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) – the agency that regulates taxicab service in the city. Drivers have asked BACP to take immediate action on several concerns:

- A review of lease rates, which increased dramatically in 2012, and subsequent charges cab companies add on to the cost
- Reducing the exorbitant credit card fees charged to drivers – the 5 percent fee charged by credit-card processing companies comes entirely out of the driver's fare
- Reformed rule enforcement clearly defining offenses, instituting fair penalties and holding rideshare operations like Uber and Lyft to the same standards

Other changes will require action from the Chicago City Council, but after years of rising costs and flat incomes – cab fares, the sole source of income for drivers, haven't increased since 2005 – drivers are ready for a long fight.

"We don't even make minimum wage. We've had no raise in eight years," David Mangum, another cab driver, told the AFSCME delegates at the rally. "You do this job 60, 70 hours a week just to survive. Whatever happened to an honest day's pay for an honest day's work?"

## Rallying for change

THE REV. WILLIAM BARBER, WHO has led the Moral Mondays protests in North Carolina,

gave his support to the cab drivers at the Chicago rally, casting their fight as part of the broader struggle for living wages for all workers.

"Cab drivers are more than just drivers. They are more than invisible faces behind the wheel," Barber said. "Without them our cities would come to a standstill. You really don't want to see a city without taxicab drivers. Their work must be respected. Their work is important."

"The people in city hall, the people in the legislature, they're making decisions that affect the lives of these drivers day in and day out, but the drivers have no say in that," Council 31 Executive Director Roberta Lynch told the crowd. "It's time for cab drivers in Chicago to have a voice and that voice is AFSCME."

AFSCME International President Lee Saunders capped off the rally by calling for a "U-turn" in the treatment of cab drivers.

"The cab drivers of Chicago are taking the wheel in this fight for fairness. They are fighting for a say in all the laws and regulations that affect their jobs and livelihoods," he said. "The entire AFSCME family is picking up their banner. We are standing with the cab drivers this afternoon, tomorrow, the next day and the next day until they get justice."



Former International Secretary-Treasurer Bill Lucy (third row back on left) joined Chicago taxicab drivers rallying in support of their effort to organize.



# Assaults highlight safety concerns at DOC, DJJ facilities

**R**ecent violent incidents at several Illinois correctional facilities are a reminder that understaffing and overcrowding continue to pose a threat to the safety of employees.

SHAWNEE CORRECTIONAL CENTER HAS SEEN THREE CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS ASSAULTED IN less than a month. Most recently, an inmate head-butted an officer, resulting in a concussion that forced the officer to miss several weeks of work.

Kelley Beal, president of Local 3605 at Shawnee, said the assaults resulted from the state's decision to reduce segregated space at the prison, converting 100 "seg" units to general population units.

The lack of segregated space means that inmates who break the rules are merely restricted to their own cells where they're able to watch TV, listen to the radio and engage in other activities that aren't available in a segregated unit.

"It's really disheartening when a guy gets room restrictions when you know he should have gotten seg space," Beal said.

Beal said inmates also know there's a reduced likelihood of being sent to a maximum security facility, particularly since the state's closure of Tamms CC.

"Inmates are starting to figure out that the max facili-

ties are full, and seg is full, so they can get away with a lot more than what they used to," he said.

## Staffing problems

SHAWNEE ISN'T THE ONLY FACILITY where inmate assaults have become more common. In early July, a correctional officer at Menard Correctional Center was assaulted by inmates as he carried gas masks and tear gas canisters through the prison's cafeteria.

While two inmates were able to get gas masks, the targeted correctional officer was able to not only maintain control of the tear gas canisters but also alert co-workers who rushed in to bring the situation under control. Had the inmates gotten ahold of the tear gas canisters, the situation would have been far worse. Three correctional employees suffered injuries, including broken ribs.

Local 1175 Vice President Mike Smith said the incident exposed a serious flaw in how staff members are used during meal times: While several people are tasked with making sure the cafeteria, staffed by inmates, is running smoothly, no one on staff is devoted to maintaining a secure and safe environment.

"Someone needs to be roaming at all times for security purposes," he said. "That dining room only shuts down for a couple hours in the middle of the night. Other than that there's always food supervisors outnumbered by the inmates they have there."

The incident has also increased pressure for DOC to change its policy for how



tear gas canisters are moved within a facility – something correctional officers have requested before.

"This has been brought up numerous times," Smith said. "Until this situation happened, no one had the forethought to make a change. Now the canisters are going to be moved however weapons and ammo move."

## Disrespect at DJJ

AT DJJ FACILITIES, COMPLAINTS are mounting over a department policy that has resulted in some offenders only receiving an hour-long detention after violent incidents – a punishment employees deride as a "time-out."

"Right now the Department of Juvenile Justice is taking an approach that makes it very difficult to prevent outbreaks of violence by the youth," Council 31 staff representative Tony McCubbin said. "You have to understand some of these people are 17, 18, 19. They're not really kids anymore."

Tod Williams, president of Local 801 at Kewanee IYC, said DJJ policies and practices have left staff members feeling disrespected by their employer.

"There's a disregard for the staff," Williams said. "There are gang members here and they're getting treated like little kids. A time-out doesn't work for anyone past

five years old. It's not going to work for a hardened gang member."

Williams said he's taken to sending letters to senators and representatives, urging them to take a closer look at what's going on within the department and called for a greater commitment to security and safety.

"Come work in my facility, come see what goes on and come understand just how dangerous it is," he said. "The first thing that needs to change is they need to put someone in charge of the department that has a realistic view of security – not just for us, but for the less violent youth who are incarcerated here."

## Roberta Lynch

Continued from page 3

vate cab companies, but in fact their incomes and conditions of employment are largely determined by governmental policies. That's where AFSCME can make a big difference in their lives. Many currently work 60-70 hours a week and barely make

the minimum wage, when all of the costs they have to bear are factored in.

At the same time, we're continuing to organize public employees in our state. It's amazing to realize, but there are still groups of employees, especially in local government and state universities, who do not have the protections and

the benefits of a union contract. We're not going to forget about them.

In all of these efforts, it's striking how much time and money employers waste in seeking to defeat the efforts of their employees to gain union representation. Union-busting consultants, big bucks, threats and harassment – all of it aimed at

trying to stifle the desire of workers to improve their lives.

When you talk about the organizing of the future, I believe we will increasingly rely on Volunteer Member Organizers (VMOs). We've found that rank-and-file members who can talk directly from their own experience are the best organizers of all.

## OTM: Can our union weather all these storms?

I have no doubt there are some very tough times ahead – we just don't know exactly how tough. But I can tell you this: I've never known AFSCME to shirk a fight. Time and again, I've seen our members rise to

challenges that so many others said couldn't be won. And win them we did. We're not only still standing after all these years – we're standing stronger and taller than ever. But if we want to maintain the power we've built and the progress we've made, then we're going to have to be prepared to do more – more members involved, more resources committed, more effort on all our parts. It won't be easy, but nothing worthwhile ever is. I'm ready to take on whatever comes. I know our Council 31 Executive Board is. And from talking to our members around the state, I'd say a whole lot of them are, too.





## Wisconsin AFSCME members have a message for Illinois: Act now, before it's too late

**A** FSCME members in Wisconsin have a simple message for their union brothers and sisters in Illinois: Don't let what happened to us happen to you.

The union's members in Wisconsin are now in their fourth year since the passage of Gov. Scott Walker's Public Act 10, which was passed over furious protests that engulfed the state capitol in Madison in 2011. The law gutted the collective bargaining rights of public employees at all levels of government throughout the state.

The results have been catastrophic: Lower union membership, lower pay and no protections at the workplace.

So when Wisconsin members hear that Bruce Rauner considers Scott Walker a model for his own administration, they waste no time in warning of what could happen if Rauner is elected in November.

"You might have had bad governors before, but anybody who's looking up to Scott Walker is the last thing you want to see in your state," said Paul Spink, a member of Local 2748, which represents Department of Children and Families employees. "It doesn't matter what you have to do, you have to stop Bruce Rauner. You do not want to become Wisconsin."

### DIRE CONSEQUENCES

Since Act 10 went into effect, union members in Wisconsin have seen their contracts expire and be replaced with pay cuts, longer hours, higher turnover and managers that have no reservations about playing favorites because there's no effective grievance procedure to stop them.

"I actually had an administrator get in my face and tell me that according to Act 10, you all have no union, so there's no need for us to talk to you," said Marion Chambers, a mental health nursing assistant represented by Local 170 in Milwaukee County. "We have people working 16

hours every day just so they can put food on the table for their children. It's been a nightmare. We can't negotiate anything."

Many Wisconsin public employees now receive only paltry pay raises each year. Due to increases in pension contributions and health insurance premiums – now fully at the employer's discretion – take-home pay for many has fallen by more than 10 percent.

"Seniority and experience means nothing anymore. Workplace positions are up to the higher-ups and we don't have a say," said Matt Bublitz, a correctional officer and president of Local 1323E in Dodge County. "They could have a county board meeting the night before and make a drastic change and we won't even know about it."

### NO TIME TO BE COMPLACENT

Wisconsin AFSCME members will be the first to admit they didn't fully understand the threat Walker presented when he was running in 2010. While attacks on unions and collective bargaining rights weren't a part of his campaign, union members also failed to press him on what he would do if elected.

Back then, some felt the race for governor would have little impact on their lives. Now, they regret not doing enough.

"We just became complacent and we just weren't as concerned with politics as we needed to be and that's something that was a huge mistake on our part," said Nancy Anderson, a Polk County employee in Local 774. "We should have been more diligent, making sure we knew who we were voting for and what they stood for."

Even though public employees turned out in force at the state capitol once Act 10 was on the table, it wasn't enough – Walker had the votes he needed to get the bill passed.

The time to stop people like Scott Walker and Bruce Rauner isn't when they're in office – it's

when they're running, said Steve Kroll, who works for the Milwaukee County Register of Deeds.

"There's no reason why you should sit back and just let things happen. If you don't get engaged in the process, it's likely you'll lose," he said.

Bublitz said many public employees in Wisconsin were simply caught off-guard.

"I wish we had been more proactive instead of reactive," he said. "It's very unfortunate we weren't aware of the dangers that were occurring until it was too late."

AFSCME members in Illinois don't have that excuse, though. Bringing down public employee unions has been the defining characteristic of Rauner's campaign since day one.

"Anybody who is going to do anything to take away collective bargaining rights, to get rid of the union, you just can't go down that road," Anderson said. "If I heard anybody say that Scott Walker was their role model, you got to do everything you possibly can, everything, so that that man doesn't set foot in that office. You just can't let that happen. Even if that means taking the lesser of two evils."

The good news is that the formula for defeating Bruce Rauner is nothing new: It's the same people-powered action that has propelled unions to victory in the past.

But to beat a candidate like Rauner – who has the wealthy elite fueling his campaign – that plan needs to be put into action now, not in the closing weeks of the election.

"You need to get people to the polls. You need to spread the word about what's going to happen. Get involved in the PEOPLE program, get your members involved, get the boots on the ground," Bublitz said. "Start now, because if you wait, it's going to be too late and you're going to be getting text messages at 10 o'clock at night saying they're passing a bill and you need to get down to the capitol."





**DENISE GOSHA, LOCAL 2946**

I've been seeing [Rauner's] commercials since November attacking the union.

They're trying to make this a right-to-work state. If that happens, we won't have a middle class – we'll only have the rich and powerful. Without the union, anyone could tell you that your job is gone, your pension is gone.

# AFSCME MEMBERS WORKING TO STOP RAUNER

Across Illinois, AFSCME members are responding to Bruce Rauner's attacks on public employees and unions the best way they can – by working hard to make sure he doesn't become the next governor of Illinois.

AFSCME members know all about Rauner's dangerous agenda for Illinois. Now, they're spreading the word about it in their communities.



**CHRIS MILTON, LOCAL 799**

We can't let Bruce Rauner be the governor because it would destroy so much good we've done. I ask people if they value the job they have, if they value their benefits, if they understand the magnitude of what could happen in November if we don't do everything we can to defeat Rauner.

In my local, we're asking people to stand up. We're asking people to give up three, four, 10 hours between now and Election Day. Stand up. Don't be afraid. We have your back. Everyone in a green shirt's got your back. We're all on the same team.



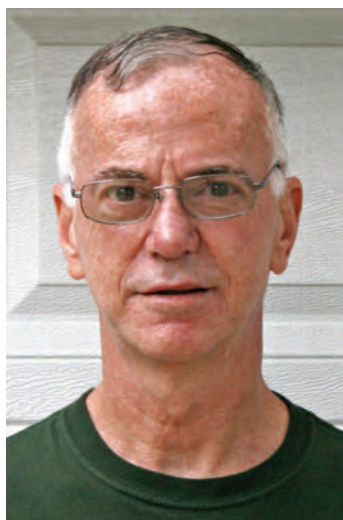
**PAULINE TURLLOW, LOCAL 2858**

Rauner would be horrible for Illinois. He represents the super-rich, not working people. He doesn't pay his fair share of taxes. And he wants to eliminate pensions.



**WILLIAM D. STOKES, LOCAL 692**

Rauner would follow the Wisconsin model and try to privatize everything. He's said he's willing to shut down unions and take away bargaining rights. I think he's going to go after public employee unions and their members. You'd be breaking down something we've built up for a long time.



**WYATT DYKSTRA, LOCAL 448**

He scares me, and it's not just because I'm a state worker. Even if I wasn't, the thing that worries me is he wants to get rid of the middle class and it's the middle class that makes us strong. He's in a cheaper tax bracket than I am and he's a millionaire.

That tells you what kind of politician he is and who he'd favor. He'd favor the rich and help them get richer at the expense of the middle class.



**GARY MAZZOTTI, LOCAL 805**

Bruce Rauner's going to try to take away collective bargaining from state employees, municipal employees and teachers. He wants to turn Illinois into a "right-to-work" state. He wants to rewrite our contracts and says he'd be honored to preside over a strike to force us to take a pay cut. It's despicable.

He was ahead in the primary by 13 percent and ended up winning by only 3 percent. That was because of us. The union coalition we have can bring him down.



**STEPHANIE VALENTINE, LOCAL 2515**

Rauner wouldn't be for the middle class. He's sending out the wrong message about unions and what they represent.

At Milestone [a direct support agency for people with developmental disabilities], we just joined AFSCME and I want to be involved and come out to support anything the union has going on. Come out and support our union. It's for a good cause and it's for our future, and our children's future.



**ANNA BROADFOOT, LOCAL 2887**

We do a brown bag lunch once a month and Bruce Rauner is the number one topic that we talk about and has been for quite some time. He's going to go after AFSCME because he knows we're dangerous to him.

Talk to everyone you know about him. The more people we can come into contact with, the better chance we stand across the state. Someone will talk about it at dinner and the next thing you know they're talking to someone else. It just spreads.



**RUSTY MCCLAIN, RETIREE**

It's pretty clear he hates unions and isn't a man for the middle class. I'm sure he's got the same ideas Scott Walker does. They gutted the state employee unions and public sector unions in Wisconsin and I'm sure Rauner has a plan to do the same. Your benefits, your wages and your pensions are all things Bruce Rauner wants to get rid of.



# Rauner's own words demonstrate hostility toward unions

**B**ruce Rauner's spent nearly \$10 million of his own money on his run for governor. His wealthy friends have kicked in millions more. That money will buy a lot, but it won't erase the things Rauner's said about public employees and their unions.

THIS IS BRUCE RAUNER ON THE RECORD: ANTI-WORKER, ANTI-UNION, ANTI-AFSCME.

## On public employee unions:

- "Their power is organized against the public good."
- "By their nature they're immoral. By their nature they're corrupt."

- "By their very nature, government employee labor unions are 'pay-to-play' politics at its worst."
- "AFSCME and SEIU and the teachers' unions have got the taxpayers by the throats and our school children by the throats."

## On public employee pay and benefits:

- "They've used their taxpayer-funded union dues to recycle a portion of those to make political contributions to politicians... In exchange for which the politicians have continuously offered them bigger, more lucrative pensions of higher and higher pay, free health care, better pay and benefits that nobody in Illinois gets in the private sector..."
- "And our schools are being defunded while we are giving more pay increases, bigger pensions, free health care to those special interest groups in the government unions."
- "[Pension benefits] were negotiated on a conflicted basis, virtually a fraudulent basis, and that's the reason they're so overly generous. And it's the reason that they're unsustainable and unaffordable."

## On his role models, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker and former Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels:

- "Scott Walker did it – we've got to take on the power of the government union bosses."
- "Mitch Daniels is my role model. I'm going to try to steal a lot of his people and his best ideas."

## On his real agenda:

- "We may have to do what Ronald Reagan did with the air traffic controllers. Sort of have to do a do-over and shut things down for a little while. That's what we're gonna do."
- "What if we allow local governments to decide for themselves whether they become 'right to work?' I think that would be pretty popular."
- "I will take on the teachers' unions, AFSCME and SEIU."
- "I may have to take a strike and shut down the government for a few weeks to re-do everybody's contract. I will do it proudly."

# Retirees find they can't trust Bruce Rauner



**A** recent meeting in Springfield between Republican gubernatorial candidate Bruce Rauner and a group largely consisting of state retirees, all caught on tape, reveals that Rauner knows shockingly little – and appears to care even less – about retirement security. Here's some of what Rauner had to say – and the real truth.

*"I've been working for you; I've been investing your pension funds."*

Rauner has indeed made a lot of money managing pension

funds – work that's been tainted by corruption and insider deals.

A few years ago, Rauner's firm received millions in Pennsylvania pension dollars to

invest – after a \$300,000 campaign contribution to that state's Democratic governor. Here in Illinois, a company owned by Rauner paid a member of the Teachers' Retirement System Board more than \$25,000 a month as a "consultant." Not coincidentally, Rauner's firm was selected to handle TRS pension dollars. The TRS board member, Stuart Levine is now doing time in federal prison for public malfeasance.

*"I believe what they did [with SB1, the pension reform bill], and I've said it all along, is unconstitutional."*

Rauner may think SB 1 is unconstitutional, but the real reason he opposed it was that, in his own words, it "didn't go far enough" in cutting pensions.

Rauner has said that public

employees have "stunningly generous pension benefits," that allow them to retire "with higher pay for the rest of their lives than they got while they were working." He has also stated that public pensions are an "excess" and that "when those excess benefits are being paid out to government employees, taxpayers lose."

*"For future work, my plan is a second pension system. Voters have a defined contribution plan, or 401(k), there's no reason that there is anything unfair about it for future work."*

Rauner's suggestion of going with a 401(k)-style plan has major problems.

First, when 401(k)-style plans replace existing public pension plans, the results can be disastrous. For example, a report from the National Public Pension Coalition showed that when West Virginia switched to a 401(k)-style plan, "it found that public employees had such low incomes in retirement that they were eligible for means-tested public assistance programs, driving up costs to the state." The state eventually reversed course.

Second, 401(k)-style plans are insecure. After the

2008 crash, people enrolled in 401(k) plans lost, on average, 25-30 percent of their retirement income in a matter of days.

Finally, transitioning all new workers to a 401(k)-style plan would have dire consequences for Illinois public pension systems. Under 401(k) plans, employee and state contributions do not go to the pension fund, but rather to an account managed by Wall Street banks. That means is that the pension fund that current retirees draw from would become even more underfunded, as the revenues to the fund would essentially dry up over time.

*On the recent Supreme Court decision about health care premiums: "Is that suit still ongoing? Oh, I didn't know."*

The state Supreme Court's ruling that found retiree health care benefits were protected by the state constitution was a major ruling that is expected to significantly impact the fate of pension-cutting legislation as well. Rauner's claim that he "didn't know" about it means he's either lying or simply not paying attention to one of the most important issues facing the state.



# SHORT REPORTS



Patricia Ousley



David Morris

## AFSCME leaders re-elected to SERS board

TWO AFSCME LEADERS WERE RE-ELECTED TO THE BOARD OF Trustees of the State Employees Retirement System.

David Morris has been a member of the SERS Board of Trustees since 2009. A Social Service Program Planner III in the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, he has 32 years of service with the State of Illinois. He has served as the president of Local 805 for more than 10 years and is a member of the AFSCME Council 31 Executive Board.

Patricia Ousley has been a member of the SERS Board of Trustees since 2009. She has worked for the Illinois Department of Employment Security for nearly 40 years, most recently as an Unemployment Insurance Revenue Analyst. She was president of Local 1006 and serves on the AFSCME Council 31 executive board.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for overseeing the administration of all aspects of SERS' operations.

Four positions on the board are held by active state employees enrolled in the SERS system and are elected by employees.

## Glitchy red light cameras show dangers of privatization

AN INVESTIGATION OF RED LIGHT cameras in Chicago shows that the program – outsourced to a private firm – has literally taken thousands of dollars from people who did nothing wrong.

A Chicago Tribune analysis of 4 million tickets issued since the system was established in 2007 found that “thousands of Chicago drivers have been tagged with \$100 red light fines they did not deserve, targeted by robotic cameras during a series of sudden spikes in tickets that city officials say they cannot explain.”

City officials “acknowledged oversight failures and said the explosions of tickets should have been detected and resolved as they occurred,” the Tribune reported.

The spikes occurred when Chicago’s red light cameras were managed by Redflex Traffic Systems Inc., a Phoenix-based, for-profit vendor.

Redflex was fired by the city after reports that the firm bribed a public official before and after securing a contract with the city.

“Redflex is a poster child

for everything that can go wrong with privatization,” Council 31 Deputy Director Mike Newman said. “Keeping services in-house allows for greater oversight and trans-

parency and reduces chances for corruption.”

## New anti-union group aims to influence city, county laws

ALEC – THE AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE Exchange Council – is already well-known as a clearinghouse for anti-union, anti-worker legislation that has been passed in dozens of state legislatures.

Now, ALEC has established a new organization, the American City County Exchange (ACCE), that will attempt to replicate those efforts with local government.

ACCE claims it will help local governments implement “limited government, free market solutions” – phrases often used to disguise legislation aimed at weakening unions, slashing pay and benefits and gutting retirement security.

Backed largely by big corporate donors, ALEC has been the leading force behind so-called right-to-work laws as well as legislation to weaken public employee pensions, promote the privatization of public education and limit voting rights for the poor, racial minorities and college students.

ACCE will have a similar

agenda. The Guardian reported that an early draft of the agenda for an ACCE conference had a workshop simply titled “Privatization” that was later changed to “Effective Tools for Promoting Limited Government.” Another workshop was called “Releasing Local Governments from the Grip of Collective Bargaining.”

AFSCME members who work for local governments should keep an eye out for ACCE in their home towns.



Lyle Benedict

## AFSCME member recognized as one of Chicago's best

LYLE BENEDICT, A MEMBER OF Local 1215, was recently recognized by the Chicago

Reader as the city’s Best Municipal Reference Librarian.

“Few Chicagoans know as much about local government as Lyle Benedict,” the Reader declared in recognizing Benedict, who has worked for the city for 31 years – first at the municipal reference library at City Hall, and then at the Harold Washington Library Center.

Benedict shares with library patrons his vast knowledge of city history – and if he doesn’t know the answer, he knows where to find it.

“Patrons often are looking for city jobs and want to research the budgets and mandates of certain city departments. Or they want to learn how to get on the ballot for alderman. Or they’re writing a paper on the history of Navy Pier, the Dan Ryan, or the el. Benedict knows where to find the answers—which book or clip file or database,” the Reader noted.

Benedict, a PEOPLE MVP, said being an AFSCME member has been helpful to him throughout his tenure, particularly during episodes when library jobs and services have been targeted for cuts.

“I think it’s great to have some voice in what’s going on,” he said.

## Stand with postal workers: Don’t shop Staples

AFSCME members are urged to stand with U.S. Postal Service employees and boycott Staples, which is taking over some USPS work as part of a privatization deal that could jeopardize the integrity of the mail service and put local post offices at risk.

The Staples deal will replace full-service U.S. Post Offices with knock-off post offices in Staples stores that are not staffed with U.S. Postal Service employees. While Postal Service employees make fair wages that allow them to support their families, the average full-time Staples employee makes only \$18,000 a year.

Postal Service employees, unlike those at Staples, are also highly trained and sworn to safeguard the mail.

At the 41st International Convention in July, AFSCME delegates voted to put the union’s full support behind the American Postal Workers Union’s Don’t Buy Staples campaign.

In a July 2 letter to Staples Inc. CEO Ronald L. Sargeant, AFSCME International President Lee Saunders and Secretary-Treasurer Laura Reyes said “we are asking our members, friends, family members and colleagues to take their business elsewhere.” They said the Staples deal was an example of “short-sighted business arrangements that replace good, living-wage jobs with high-turnover, low-wage jobs.”





# ON THE LOCAL LEVEL



## Dolton public works employees build community bonds, win contract

AFTER MORE THAN TWO YEARS of bargaining, public works employees in Dolton – members of Local 2199 – have secured a new, four-year contract with solid wage increases, new positions and other improvements.

Along the way, the local did something that may have been just as important as the new deal: Members reached out into the community, strengthening ties with the people who depend on their services.

Earlier this year, members pooled their resources to buy 250 Easter baskets for the city's children. This summer, with the school year coming up, the local held a free raffle for 75 backpacks and four laptop computers.

"We just want to let everyone know that Public Works cares," local President James Jones said. "We wanted to give back to the community and let people know that Local 2199 cares about this community and its children."

The active community outreach is a relatively new effort the by local, which has been working hard to improve its visibility within Dolton, a village in Chicago's south suburbs.

The local's members asserted themselves at the bargaining table, too. Despite a lot of back-and-forth with management, members held firm, eventually winning an agreement that includes a 3 percent wage increase in each year. The contract also increases minimum staffing from 14 to 19 people and improves uniform allowances, reducing workers' out-of-pocket costs.

"The bargaining team was really prepared and they made good arguments at the table and they wouldn't back down," Council 31 staff representative Dick Crofter said. "People were getting tired because it went on



so long but they kept up the communication and kept people informed."

Jones said the increase in staffing was a highlight of the new agreement because it will allow the public works crew to better serve the community.

"We can actually have three crews out at a time now. We can repair a water main, fix a sewer and have another team putting in a hydrant at the same time," he said. "The residents are going to benefit."

The bargaining team, led by Crofter, included Jones, Cary Brown and Chris Jones.

## East Side Health District employees rein in management

IN THE AFTERMATH OF TALKS over a new four-year contract, members of Local 3565 are hopeful that they brought management's unilateral approach to an end.

Two years ago, the district's administrator increased employee health care costs drastically without discussing the matter with the union – a clear violation of the collective bargaining agreement.

The new contract will address that by not only rolling back health care costs, but also by requiring the health district to compensate employees for premiums they paid in violation of the previous agreement.

"She just immediately increased our health insurance without bringing in the union to discuss it with us or anything

like that," said Local President Kourtney Hicks. "At first the board had let her get by with doing that, but we've put a stop to that."

Hicks said she, along with Council 31 staff representative Carla Gillespie, was able to bring the health district's board to the bargaining table – a major improvement over negotiating solely with one administrator.

"I think going forward that there should be more progress," Hicks said.

The contract will also increase wages by 4 percent over four years – a good improvement relative to past agreements, Gillespie said.

"This was the first year we ever got more than a 1-year increase," she said.

## SIU-Edwardsville clericals take a stand, bring management to the table

NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN CLERICAL workers at Southern Illinois University's Edwardsville's campus and management had been dragging on for several months when Local 2887 President Anne Hunter decided it was time to pick up the pace.

"Negotiations were good, but only when we could get meetings scheduled," she said. "But things kept getting put off throughout the process."

Hunter sensed an opportunity when she saw the school's chancellor was holding an open forum on campus. She decided to take a stand – literally.

"I stood up and asked the chancellor what was taking so long," she said. "They just needed a little bit of a push."

The pace of talks sped up after that, leading up to the May ratification of a contract that includes a 4 percent wage increase spread over four years. The bargaining team also improved longevity bonuses.

"We came out pretty well," Hunter said. "We didn't lose anything, and with the state of the university budget, that's good."

The bargaining team included Council 31 staff representative Ed LaPorte, Hunter, Vanessa King and Vicki Daggett.

## Monmouth public works employees get fair agreement

SINCE 1998, PUBLIC WORKS SERVICES in Monmouth have been

contracted out to a number of private vendors. But while privatization can be expected to hurt wages and benefits, the members of Local 3071 have managed to still win solid contracts over the years.

The latest agreement, ratified in May, is no exception. Wages will rise by 12 percent over five years. The contract also increases sick leave and slightly increases uniform allowances.

"A lot of times they try to take things away from you but not in this case. It was pretty much fair on both sides," Local President Greg Sage said. "They put the wage increases on the table and we thought that was a pretty good deal, especially with the way the economy is."

Council 31 staff representative Randy Lynch led the bargaining team and was joined by Sage, Al Davis, Joe McVey and Brian Glasgow.

## City of Kewanee contract elevates all workers

HEADING INTO NEGOTIATIONS FOR a new contract, the Local 764 bargaining team – representing City of Kewanee employees – wanted to make sure no one was left out.

Over time, the city's public works and sanitation employees had won various improvements based on qualification-based certifications they had received. However, such certifications are not offered for the city's clerical employees. Local president Angela Hamilton said addressing clerical wages was a priority headed into talks.

In the end, the new, three-year contract includes extra pay for clericals, who are among the bargaining unit's lowest-paid employees. Their wages will rise an extra 14 cents an hour, on top of the 8.75 percent wage increase that all local members will see.

"We were able to negotiate an increase just for them," Hamilton said. "At first it was a little difficult, but it didn't take long for that to turn around and get things smoothed out pretty quickly."

Employee health care costs will rise somewhat, but overall take-home pay will still rise.

"The bargaining committee held firm on the insurance and got what it wanted," Council 31 staff representative Tony McCubbin said. "It was a rough fight at times but went very well in the end."

McCubbin led the bargaining team and was joined by

Hamilton, Todd Davis, Jane Maxon, Robert Adkison and Doug Black.

## DOC vocational instructors make gains, address inequities

A NEW THREE-YEAR CONTRACT covering employees of Lake Land College – a community college that provides vocational training at multiple Illinois Department of Corrections facilities – includes a 2 percent wage increase in each year while keeping individual health insurance premiums at existing levels.

The contract, ratified in June, was negotiated much more easily than the prior, inaugural agreement, Council 31 staff representative Chuck Stout said.

"The first agreement took almost 24 months to reach, and that was after a number of unfair labor practice charges," Stout said.

The bargaining team knew the Department of Corrections had no interest in a drawn-out process and used that fact to its advantage, persuading DOC to come out in favor of the wage increases and other improvements employees sought.

Bargaining team member Charlie Followell said a major issue was addressing pay disparities that had emerged when Lake Land College took over from vendors at other facilities. Some people had gone without raises for years and were making less than employees with less experience.

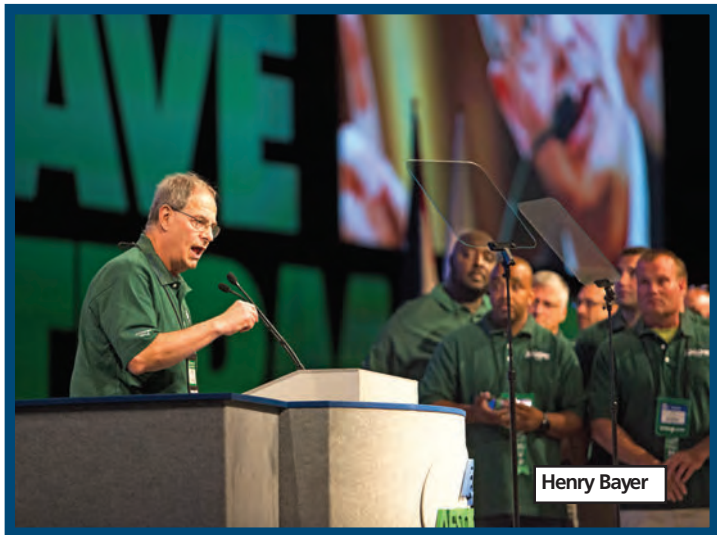
The new contract provides stipends to help make up for that difference.

"They finally agreed the wages were in such great disparity that they needed to do something, and they did," Followell said. "We felt as a union that we needed to start addressing this to be treated fairly. We took a big step in getting that corrected."

The bargaining team, led by Stout, included Followell (representing Big Muddy employees), Julie Harris (Dixon), Jack Policha (East Moline), Frank Rook (Graham), John Beavers (Hill), Patricia Burchett (Jacksonville), George Price (Lawrence), Brad Slankard (Pinckneyville), Brent Urfer (Robinson), Haley Perzee (Shawnee), Harry Bell (Sheridan), Richard Ninness (Southwestern), Steve Shales (Viana) and Jeff Garwood (Western).



# International Convention celebrates growth, honors Bayer



Henry Bayer



Lee Saunders

Over the course of five days in Chicago, AFSCME's 41st International Convention charted a path for the union's next two years.

HELPING THE UNION GO DOWN THAT PATH WILL BE MORE THAN 92,000 NEW MEMBERS SIGNED up through the union's '50,000 Stronger' campaign, which focused throughout the spring and summer on signing up "fair share" fee-payers as full union members – and wound up nearly doubling its

goal.

Council 31 has signed up hundreds of new members on its own through its "100% Union" campaign, which will continue to build strength in Illinois.

The union's expanded ranks will be essential to fulfilling the goals set by delegates from across the nation – a mission focused on protecting collective bargaining rights, preserving retirement security and defending the middle class against the assaults of the corporate elite.

"Today we must regain our passion, because we are the last line of defense for working families across this country," AFSCME International President Lee Saunders said in his address to dele-

gates. "The forces against us know we are the only barrier standing between them and their plan to reshape and remake America. They want more power. They want more wealth, at the expense of the rest of us who are working hard and playing by the rules."

If there was any doubt delegates were inspired coming out of the convention, it was extinguished when The Rev. William Barber – leader of North Carolina's Moral Mondays movement – took the stage late in the week, delivering an electrifying address that doubled as a sermon.

"We are all trade unionists," he said. "We are all civil rights activists. And it's about

time for all of us to get together and organize America like never before! It's time to say to America, 'We will not turn back now!'"

## Celebrating a leader

FOR THE DELEGATES FROM ILLINOIS, a highlight of the convention was a tribute to former Council 31 Executive Director Henry Bayer, who stepped down at the end of July.

"I can't tell you how many times I've marched through the streets of Springfield, our state capitol, with Henry at the lead," said Ruby Robinson, president of Local 2833 and one of several members who paid tribute to Bayer. "Henry has inspired so many of us, including the younger generation."

Others said Bayer helped strengthen their resolve for fights to come.

"Today, like so many other public employees, we're besieged on so many fronts," Local 46 President Gregg Johnson said. "But like other local leaders in Council 31, I have strength to keep on fighting because I've seen the way that Henry never dodged a single fight – and led us to victory in so many of them."

Saunders praised Bayer not only for fighting – and winning – political battles, but also for caring deeply about Council 31's membership.

"It's the college certificate or degree a member attained through the tuition program the council negotiated," he said. "It's the check for back pay the council wrestled the legislature and governor to fund. It's instilling pride in public service jobs."

When Bayer took the podium, he focused on how the union must be a "team sport" that depends on the strength of its members, not any one person, to succeed.

"That's why we understand in Council 31 that engaging the members, reaching out to everybody who isn't a member to make them a member, that's what we have to do as a union if we're going to survive in this environment," he said.

## PEOPLE Conference will set union's election goals

The PEOPLE Conference happening later this month is the culmination of an open, democratic process to determine which political candidates get the union's backing.

THAT PROCESS BEGAN IN LATE AUGUST WHEN 11 REGIONAL PEOPLE COMMITTEES – responsible for learning

about candidates in their area through interviews or questionnaires – met to make their recommendations. The committees are made up of the president and PEOPLE Chair from each AFSCME local union in the region.

This year, votes in the General Assembly on legislation cutting pensions for state and state university employees, as well as City of Chicago employees, will play a major role in the endorsement process, according to Council 31 Political Action Director, Jason Kay.

"Some people in the General Assembly showed they

stood with public employees, but others disappointed us," Kay said. "We need to support those who defended retirement security and hold accountable the people who didn't."

When the PEOPLE Executive Committee, comprised of representatives from all 11 regions, meets in September, it bases the endorsements it makes in state legislative races on the recommendations of those regional committees.

Then on September 13, the presidents and PEOPLE chairs from locals across the state will come together in Peoria for the statewide PEOPLE

Conference. This larger body will determine whether to make endorsements – and if so, who to endorse – in races for the state's constitutional offices, as well as contests for U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

"At every step in this process, the people who are learning about the candidates and making endorsement recommendations are people who were elected to do so by the members of their local," said Jason Kay, Council 31's political director. "Our union's endorsements come from the bottom up so that they can best reflect the will of our members."

One of the most critical decisions to be made by the delegates at the Peoria gathering in September will be whether to make an endorsement in the hotly contested gubernatorial election. At the previous conference in January, the delegates voted overwhelmingly to do everything possible to defeat Bruce Rauner, based on his avowed hostility to public

employee unions.

In addition to the local union presidents and the PEOPLE chairs who serve as delegates, locals are encouraged to send other interested members to observe the conference, listen to speakers and participate in workshops.

PEOPLE isn't just about making endorsements – it also enables the union to provide financial assistance and volunteers to candidates the union supports.

The all-stars of this process are PEOPLE MVPs: members who voluntarily contribute at least \$100 a year to the program. Locals are encouraged to sign up as many members as possible to be PEOPLE MVPs.

"We're going to need as many MVPs as possible to not only stand up to Bruce Rauner's multi-million dollar campaign, but also to provide strong backing to those who have stood with us," Kay said. "By signing up to be an MVP, you give yourself an even greater voice in the union's future."



# RETIREE NOTES

## Retiree Chapter 31 remembers Doris Clark (1915-2014)



AFSCME LOST ONE OF ITS BRIGHTEST STARS WITH THE PASSING ON AUG. 9 OF CHAPTER 31 RETIREE PRESIDENT EMERITUS DORIS CLARK.

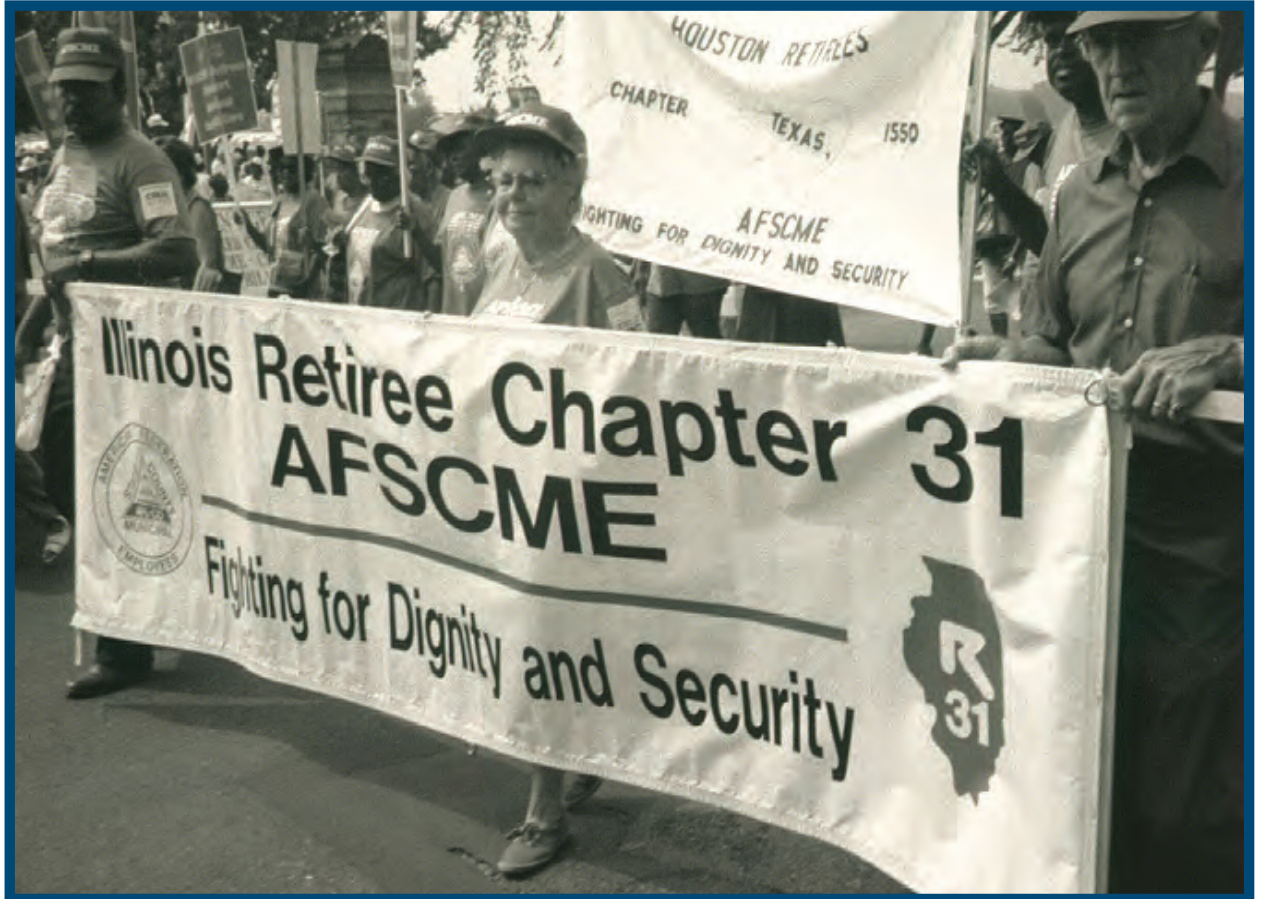
For more than 25 years, Doris ably represented Illinois retirees on the AFSCME International Retiree Council, on the boards of AFSCME Retiree Chapter 31, AFSCME Council 31, the State Employees' Retirement System, the Illinois State Council of Senior Citizens, the Illinois Alliance for Retired Americans and Citizen Action/Illinois.

In those many capacities, Doris gave voice to the needs not only of state retirees and senior citizens, but of all working families. Whether it was speaking at rallies and press conferences, or testifying at hearings before the state legislature, she stood firm in advancing the issues important to senior citizens.

"Doris was a union stalwart in every sense of the term – deeply committed and utterly intrepid. There was no task she was ever asked to take on that she refused – or failed to give her all," said Roberta Lynch, Council 31 executive director.

Doris, born January 14, 1915, in Chesterfield, began her career with AFSCME when she worked as a payroll officer for the State of Illinois at Jacksonville Developmental Center where she was actively involved in her local.

Doris' commitment to improving the lives of others continued into retirement, when she was instrumental in the organizing of AFSCME Illinois Retiree Chapter 31. As a founding member, Doris often spoke of Chapter 31's early years recalling the meager benefits retirees received back then and the uphill battles they fought to improve those benefits. "Doris was a persistent lobbyist on senior issues," said Steve Regenstreif, retired AFSCME International Retiree Director. Just a few weeks before she passed, at the age of 99, Doris talked about coming to Springfield to put her muscle behind the fight to preserve retire-



ment security.

"Doris had such great foresight," said Chapter 31 Northern Vice-President and long-time friend, Hal Gullet. "Leaders like her don't come around very often, and I feel so lucky to have been able to work with her for so long."

Doris was a recipient of the Governor's Award for Unique Achievement in Labor and was named to the Senior Illinoisan Hall of Fame in 2009. She is also the first and only AFSCME retiree to hold the title of President Emeritus of Chapter 31. A resident of Jacksonville, she also was honored in 2003 with the Milton Cohen Award from Citizen Action/Illinois. The annual prize, named in memory of one of the state's most respected civic activists, honors community leaders who carry on his "vision and integrity."

Doris may be gone but her legacy lives on in us as we continue her work to improve the lives of working class families and retirees.

Great changes in history are made when ordinary people work together to do extraordinary things. Doris Clark, in her long career as an activist and union leader, constantly brought people together for such purposes. She was extraordinary.

### Chapter 31 mourns passing of charter members

TWO CHARTER MEMBERS OF AFSCME Retiree Chapter 31 recently passed away.

Elvia Steward died on August 1 at the age of 97. As a mental health technician at the Manteno State Hospital, Elvia was heavily involved in her local union, serving as a steward, a negotiator and an officer for Local 1563.

She was a key figure in the organization of AFSCME Retirees Chapter 31, where she was a longtime recording secretary. She also served as president of sub-chapter 57 in Kankakee.

She served the community in many ways as a member of the board of directors for the

Center for Re-Creation And Family Training; a charter member of the Sheriff Merit Commission; president of the Pembroke Community Choir; a member of Habitat for Humanity; member of the area agency on aging's advisory board; chairperson for Kankakee Triad, Kankakee County Sheriff's Department; president of the Kankakee Mental Health Council; and recipient of the Bell Morgan Mental Health Award.

Arlou Waller passed away on June 11 at the age of 91. Arlou retired as a mental health specialist from Alton Mental Health center in 1983. She quickly got involved with AFSCME Retirees, becoming a charter member of Chapter 31 and founding member of sub-chapter 59 in Alton.

Arlou was heavily involved in the labor movement from an early age. In 1940, Waller went to work at Western Cartridge, where she trimmed metal off the bullets that were used later in World War II. In 1942, workers there went on strike as they fought to organize with the Machinists Union. She joined the strikers – coming from a strong union family, she knew that if she crossed the picket line, she would be harming not only her fellow workers but all other workers that would come after her.

Arlou received the Eva McDonald award for her lifetime dedication to the women's movement, her dedication to strengthening women's right in the workplace, and her work in establishing Chapter 31.

### Medicare Advantage: problems and solutions

AS MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE STATE and university retirees settle into their new Medicare Advantage plans, some common questions and problems have emerged.

Retirees have reported paying higher than expected copays for prescription drugs. In many instances, this has been due to a clerical error on the part of the insurance carrier. Generally, if you are being charged more than \$60 for a one-month supply of a drug (\$50 under Humana and Coventry), you are probably paying too much and should call your insurance carrier.

Some retirees are also reporting that they are having problems getting their doctor

or health care provider to accept the new insurance plans. Retirees on the Humana or Coventry plans should check with their insurance carrier to make sure their doctors are in-network; some doctors that were in-network under the old plans may no longer be available.

For retirees who elected the United Healthcare plan, the "network" is any provider that accepts Medicare patients. If you are on the United Healthcare plan and your doctor will not accept your plan it is important that you contact United immediately. To reach each of the carriers, use these phone numbers: United Healthcare – (888) 223-1092; Coventry Advantra – (855) 223-4807; Humana – (800) 951-0125.

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# U.S. Supreme Court tilts toward the union-busters

**W**hen the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its ruling in the pivotal *Harris v. Quinn* case, many observers said the labor movement had dodged a bullet.

BUT IN FACT, THE COURT'S 5-4 RULING SEVERELY SETS BACK A DECADES-LONG CRUSADE TO raise the living standards of some of the lowest-paid among us – home health care aides – denying them the same union rights as other public employees. While the decision didn't go as far as the National Right-to-Work Foundation – the organization that bankrolled the case – would have liked, it nonetheless sets a dangerous precedent.

In this instance, the court refused to strike down state laws that require represented public employees to either pay union dues as members or pay a "fair share" fee to cover the cost of union services as non-members.

"But... Justice Alito's opinion [written for the majority] made clear that the relentless assault on workers' rights will not abate," AFSCME International President Lee Saunders said.

National Right-to-Work

and other anti-union forces – with almost unlimited financial backing from the corporate elite – are certain to keep working to weaken unions and collective bargaining rights.

Here are five things every AFSCME member should know about the attacks on worker freedoms:

**Opponents want to reverse our gains:** For more than 40 years, National Right-to-Work has tried to prevent hard-working men and women from bargaining collectively for better wages and benefits. Don't be fooled by right-to-work schemes: Their intent is to destroy unions and drive down wages, benefits and retirement security for all workers.

**Harris v. Quinn was an attack on all workers:** Make no mistake – National Right-to-Work's lawsuit was an attack aimed at all public sector unions. Their argument is that government workers should not be able to pull



**"We may have dodged a bullet, but National Right-to-Work, the Koch Brothers, ALEC and others are going to keep up the assault,"**  
–Mike Newman

home-care workers to have a voice on the job and to speak out for their clients – senior citizens and people with disabilities – who want to live in their homes. It's about public service workers' right to improve their ability to deliver quality services and to collectively defend their rights as public employees.

**Women are at risk:** The *Harris* case particularly harms women. Home health aides are largely a female workforce. Before many gained union representation, their jobs paid no more than minimum wage. With union rights, they've begun to climb out of poverty. The Supreme Court's ruling undermined their right to form a union and undermined the ability of women to

together to negotiate wages, benefits and other conditions of employment, simply because they are in public service.

**No voice at work:** The *Harris* case was really about freedom of speech and freedom of association. It is about the freedom of millions of

get the fair and equitable compensation they deserve.

**Attacks are bankrolled by the mega-rich:** Although they do their best to hide their donors, groups like National Right-to-Work and the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) are funded by the super wealthy to further enrich themselves at the expense of working people.

"We may have dodged a bullet, but National Right-to-Work, the Koch Brothers, ALEC and others are going to keep up the assault," Council 31 Deputy Director Mike Newman said. "We can't let our guard down for one second."

## Pana

Continued from page 3

stood with him, but also urged others to show their support. Local 726 President Patty Butkauskas sent a letter to the editor of the local newspaper urging the community to show its appreciation for the work performed by local police officers.

"The next time you see Adam, or any of our officers, tell them thank you for what they do," Butkauskas wrote. "Our appreciation needs to be shown to all our officers for this ongoing struggle to keep our town safe and drug free!"

Ladage doesn't consider himself a hero, noting that many public service workers take risks every day – and should receive proper care when injured on the job.

"People should be taken care of for the risks they take, whether it's a streets department employee going into a hole or us going into a building," he said. "People should be taken care of and compensated for what they go through."

Like many public employees, he's dedicated to service. He's expected to make a full recovery within a few weeks and plans to be back on the job as soon as possible.

"I enjoy what I do and I'm ready to go back as soon as I'm able," he said.

## RETIREEE NOTES

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### AFSCME Retirees recruit at Illinois State Fair

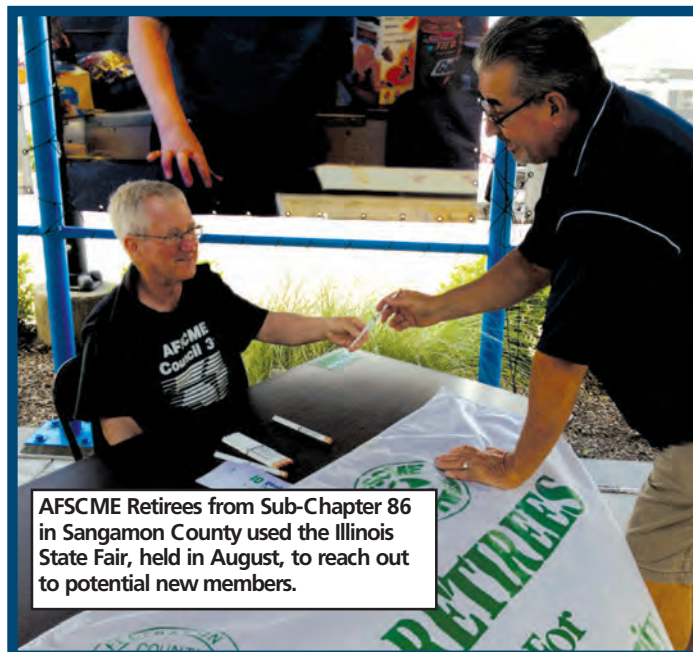
AFSCME RETIREES FROM SUB-Chapter 86 in Sangamon County used the Illinois State Fair, held in August, to reach out to potential new members.

"The state fair is a unique opportunity to not just grow our own membership, but since so many people travel to this event from other parts of the state, we can potentially help grow membership for other sub-chapters as well," said Don Todd, president of

Sub-Chapter 86.

Beyond recruitment, the State Fair offers an opportunity for Retirees to get their message out to the public at large.

"We've had a lot of conversations with people about the importance of public sector jobs, and why attacks on our retirement security don't just hurt us – they hurt every Illinoisan," Todd said. "And what better place to point out the importance of public employee contributions to the state than here, at the State Fair, which is planned and operated by public employees."



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# Back pay battle pays off

STATE EMPLOYEES GET PARTIAL PAYMENT OF BACK WAGES

**A**fter winning part of wage increases owed for more than two years, state employees are putting the money to good use - and are determined to fight for the rest of what they're owed.

Anticipation ran high after the passage of a special appropriations bill that included funding for a portion of the back wages owed to state employees for negotiated wage increases withheld in FY 12 and FY 13. The bill was passed only after dedicated, daily lobbying by state employees at the State Capitol.

By the beginning of August, employees of the five state departments where workers are still owed back pay - Human Services, Corrections, Juvenile Justice, Natural Resources and Public Health - finally received payments.

Although the percentage varied by agency, most employees saw about 45 percent of wages owed appear in their accounts.

"It felt good to finally see it," said Local 46 member Chris James, a correctional officer at East Moline CC. "It wasn't all of it, but it was good to get some of it."

James is being prudent with the money, using it to pay off some bills while saving the rest. He said even a partial victory on the issue, though, is a big motivator to keep on fighting.

"I think some people had given up or written it off," he said. "Some started to lose

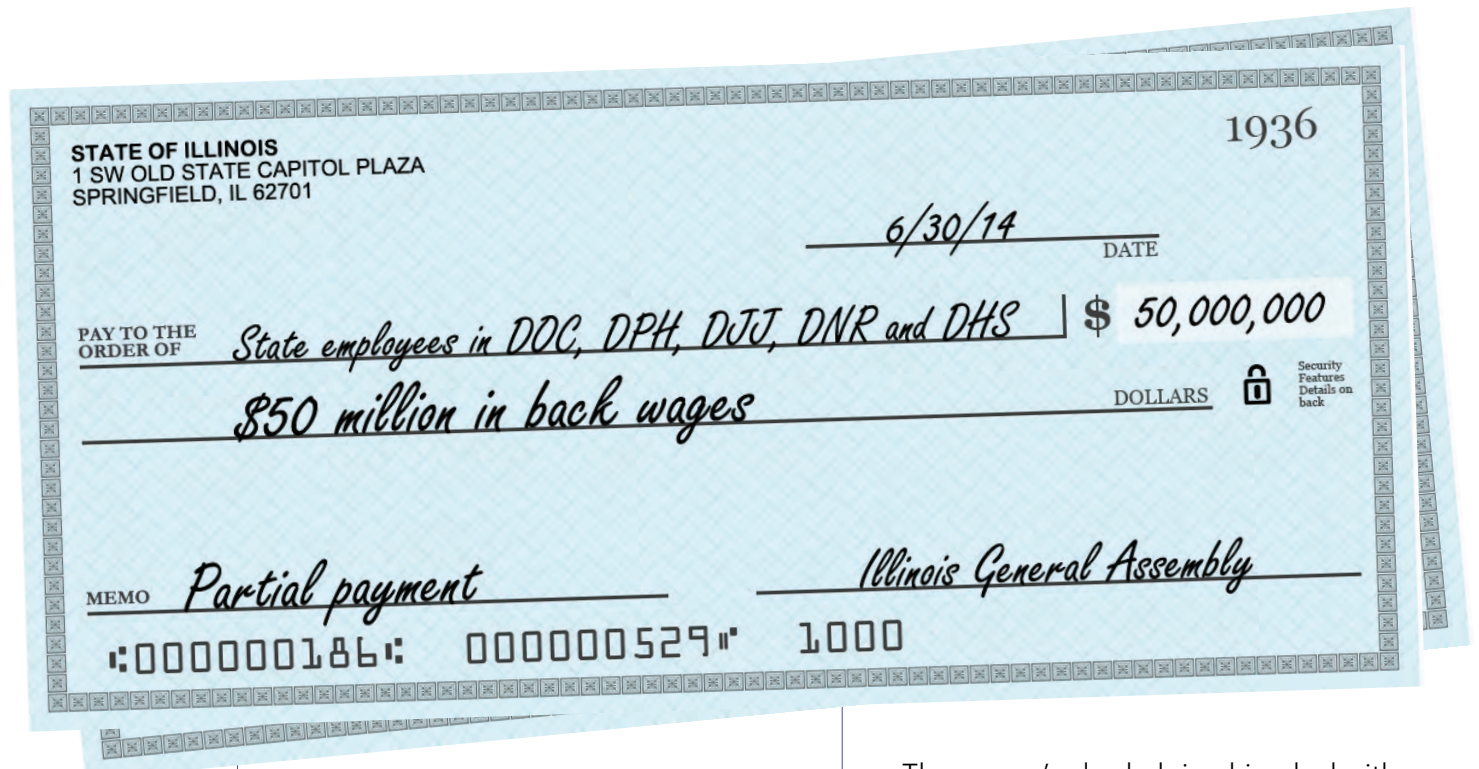
hope but our leadership kept my spirits up. I went to the state capitol to lobby for the bill a few times. Now our hard work's paid off."

Others are using the money to take care of some long-delayed expenses. Angie Fry, a licensed practical nurse at Shapiro Developmental Center, used her check to pay off what she owed for her daughter's wedding.

Fry, a member of Local 29, said the victory is proof of union power.

"It was everyone's involvement that got us there," she said. "I went to the capitol a few times. We all have to fight the fight. Each and every one of us has to be involved."

Some AFSCME members - especially longtime employees - are using the money to take a well-earned vacation. For Nick Crisman, a correctional officer at Sheridan CC, that vacation will also double as a late honeymoon with his wife of two years.



The money's also helping him deal with a more recent problem: His family's refrigerator was breaking down.

"I didn't tell my wife about the trip until I already booked it and I kind of surprised her with it," he said. "I surprised her and then said 'Let's go get that new fridge.'"

Crisman went to the capitol to lobby legislators, too, but not for himself.

"My feeling was always that I didn't really need the money, but I knew a lot of people were having a hard time," he said. "Their furnaces were going out. Maybe they weren't able to go and I was there for them to make sure their voices were heard."

Voices will be heard again at the capitol for sure. Once legislators return to Springfield this fall, AFSCME will resume the fight for back-pay and won't stop until every employee is paid every dollar they're owed.

"We've still got to fight and stay involved," Fry said. "We need to get everything they owe us."