

# RETIREE NOTES



AFSCME Chapter 31 retirees represent at the PEOPLE conference in May.

Sub-chapter 86 members accept service award from a local food pantry.

## Retirees ready to flex political muscle

“THIS NOVEMBER’S MID-TERM election is very important to the labor movement for various reasons,” said John Tilden, president of Sub-chapter 66 in Lake and McHenry counties. “It is not only that we must turn out to support candidates for office that pledge to preserve our benefits, but we also have an opportunity to enshrine in the state Constitution the right we currently have to organize a union by voting in favor of the Workers’ Rights Amendment.”

Tilden was one of nearly a hundred retirees who took part in the AFSCME PEOPLE conference in May where delegates voted to endorse candidates in June’s primary election.

Retirees are determined to support the Workers’ Rights Amendment, which will be on the ballot in the Nov. 8 General Election, because many of them were around before public

employees won the right to collectively bargain under Illinois law in 1984.

“We understand what it was like to be powerless against harassment and abuse by management,” said Mary Jones, vice president of Illinois Retirees Chapter 31, “and we do not want our children, grandchildren or any future generations to experience that injustice if we can prevent it.”

“When I took a job at the Department of Public Aid, management promoted people they liked and tried to get rid of anyone who wasn’t white,” said John Ormins, a retiree from Sub-chapter 73 based in Joliet. “When I was trying to organize a union, the pamphlets were stripped out of my hands and I was called a communist. But management continued to mistreat people and participation grew. Soon we had overwhelming support to have representation.”

Now AFSCME retirees are ready to make phone calls, knock on doors and do everything they can to get out the

vote and encourage people to vote YES for workers’ rights.

“We have an uphill battle against big-money groups who will try to muddy the water and convince people to vote against their interests,” Jones said. “We must encourage workers to stand united to protect themselves and their children against those who wish to strip the rights we have so doggedly worked to gain.”

## Sub-chapter 86 gives back

THE SPRINGFIELD FIFTH Street Renaissance, a community organization that helps people in need throughout the Springfield area, recognized AFSCME Retiree Sub-chapter 86 with an award for their service and contributions to the organization’s food pantry.

“We are proud and humbled to be given an award for our contribution,” said Sub-chapter 86 President Don

Todd. “Our members recognize that many people do not have the resources that are required to provide for their basic needs, and we just wanted to do our best to help.”

Pictured receiving the award on behalf of Springfield-area Sub-chapter 86, left to right, are Liam McDonnell (executive board member), Debbie Williams of Fifth Renaissance, Don Todd (president), Tom Bolinger (secretary), and Alyson Hughes (vice president).

## Supporting Murray Center

THE WARREN G. MURRAY Developmental Center is a state of Illinois residential facility that provides a home and care for individuals with developmental disabilities. Dedicated AFSCME Local 401 members work at this facility in Centralia, and AFSCME Chapter 31 retirees of Sub-chapter 85 continue to support the center.

In May, parents, staff, retirees, and residents celebrated the 51st year of the Murray Parents Association, which provides support for the center. Activities included a parade, the dedication of a new Memorial Garden, and a dance for the residents.

Sub-chapter 85 members took part in the celebration and purchased a brick to help fund the new Memorial Garden.

“AFSCME members are proud of the high quality of life and care that is provided to residents at Murray Center,” said David Ford, president of Sub-chapter 85 and a former staff member at the center. “The strength of our union provides a stable workforce at Murray Center and that fact is directly related to making this an amazing facility for residents and the community.

“The memorial garden is a beautiful demonstration of the many lives that have been touched by the Murray Center,” Ford said. “We are proud to have helped create a safe home for those who need it.”



Sub-chapter 85 members take part in the anniversary celebration for the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia.