

# 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.

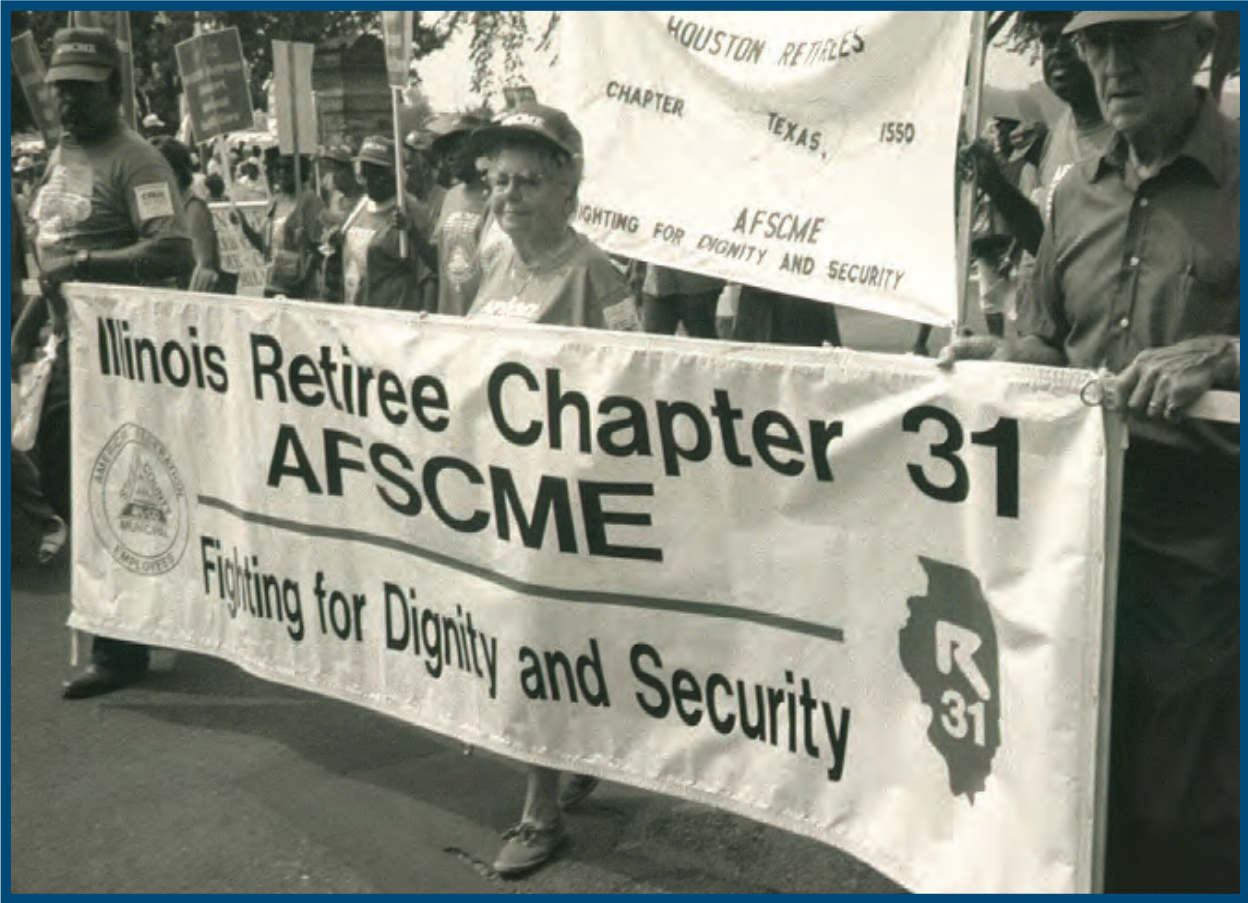
For more than 25 years, Doris ably represented Illinois retirees on the AFSCME International Retiree Council, on the boards of AFSCME Retiree Chapter 31, AFSCME Council 31, the State Employees' Retirement System, the Illinois State Council of Senior Citizens, the Illinois Alliance for Retired Americans 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 co-pays 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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## **AFSCME Retirees recruit at Illinois State Fair**

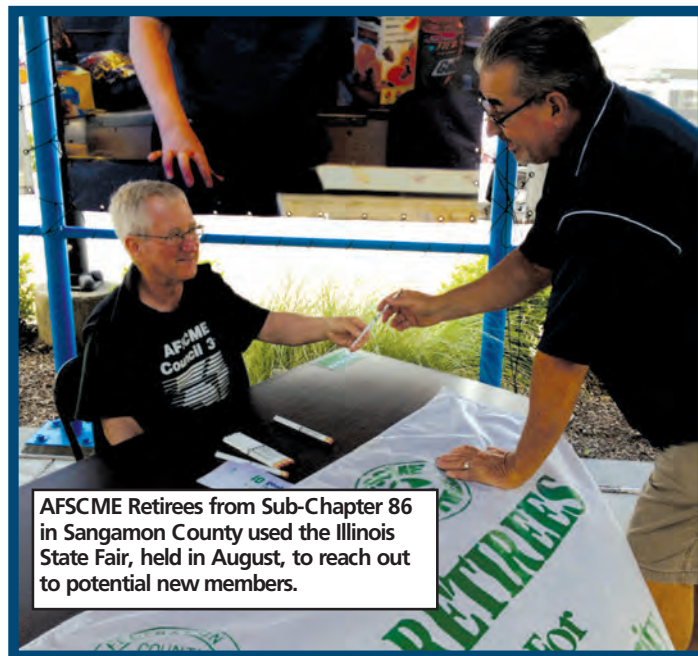
AFSCME RETIREES FROM SUB-Chapter 86 in Sangamon County used the Illinois State Fair, held in August, to reach out to potential new members.

“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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