

RETIREE NOTES



Retirees gathered at the 2018 PEOPLE Conference in Springfield, including Judi Riordan, Terri Biddle and Jay Ferraro.

Retirees gear up for 2018 election

CHAPTER 31 RETIREES ARE lacing up their boots and working to elect labor-friendly candidates this November.

"Sure, this election is important to me, but it's crucial for my kids and grandkids," said Bill Warhausan, Chapter 31 executive board member. "I want them to grow up in a state where they can have a shot at the American dream. This election will determine that for generations to come. We must get out and work."

AFSCME retirees understand the significance of this election and how important it is to reach out to active and retired union members about candidates who stand up for workers' and retirees' rights.

"Some people might not want to volunteer at certain times, like on weekends, but if Rauner gets another term, we won't be able to afford weekends," said Teri Biddle, Sub-chapter 86 executive board member. "We will have to go back to work to afford necessities!"

Retiree Sub-chapters are organizing volunteers to walk doors and make phone calls.

"Our plan is to help as much as possible," said Don Todd, president of Sub-chapter 86. "Our volunteers are fired up and ready to knock on doors and participate in phone banks."

And retirees from every corner of the state agree.

"I volunteer to knock on doors and drive seniors to the polls because the senior vote has to get out," said Judi Riordan, PEOPLE chair of Sub-chapter 162. "Double check your registration and make sure you can vote. The ones that don't vote can be the ones who decide the election and we can't let that happen."

Every election is important, but after the US Supreme Court's decision in *Janus v. AFSCME*, Illinoisans can't risk another four years under Bruce Rauner.

"This is the most important election I have ever seen," Todd emphasized. "We are fighting for our union and our democracy this November."

Union strong—reflecting on our triumphs and legacy

EACH AFSCME RETIREE member's story is different, but with one common theme: If we stand in solidarity, our union can survive and thrive in any climate.

"I have been a union man since 1962. Before the

union came to my workplace in corrections, the boss man could fire you without any notice," recalled Robert Jones, Sub-chapter 92 member. "The boss would talk to you like you were a kid. Management respected us more after the union was established at our workplace. We finally had a voice."


"The union gave us the 40-hour work week, time and a half, and employer health insurance," said Jay Ferraro, Chapter 31 executive board member and candidate for the Winnebago County Board. "These benefits changed everything. Without these wins we wouldn't have had a roof over our heads."

AFSCME continues to thrive and fight for what is owed, even under Rauner's destructive governing. By fighting together, the union won back pay owed to thousands of state workers and retirees.

"It was a long fight;

but the union won," said Gary Mazzotti, Sub-chapter 86 member. "It was the union who took the fight for back pay all the way to the Supreme Court. It was union members who went to the legislators and pushed to get our money. If it wasn't for the union, we would never have seen that money. We wouldn't even be talking about back pay."

To keep this momentum going, retirees and working members alike will have to bring unrelenting solidarity to the movement.

"If you have the union at 60 percent solidarity when approaching the bargaining table, the union is already starting at a 40 percent disadvantage," Ferraro said. "That makes it difficult to get what's necessary, like better wages and working conditions. The stronger we are together, the more protection we will be able to give ourselves." 



Did you know?

To be an AFSCME Retiree Chapter 31 member, sign an AFSCME Chapter 31 membership card!

Retiree dues are only \$3.00 a month and will be deducted directly from your pension check upon your authorization.

By joining AFSCME Retiree Chapter 31, you'll be taking a stand for retiree rights and improved benefits. You've earned your retirement benefits; now join the fight to protect them. Become a member of AFSCME Illinois Retiree Chapter 31 today—it's the best investment a retiree can make!

For more information or to request a membership card, please contact Kate Morthland, AFSCME Council 31 Retiree Coordinator, at 217.788.2800