

The Office Employees Letter

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MEMBERSHIP CARD RECORD SYSTEM APPROVED

The November meeting approved a recommendation of the Executive Committee authorizing Financial Secretary Ellis to shift from a membership ledger book record system to a card record system. The old system of record keeping required the Financial Secretary to set up a membership ledger book each year. Under the new card system each member's entire record for ten years will be kept on an individual card. This will reduce the detail work of the Financial Secretary which under the old system has become increasingly heavy with our growth in membership.

OEU Membership Pays

Any office workers doubting the value of union membership should look at the results of recent negotiations between San Francisco Local 21320 and the Messengill Co. of that city. The unorganized office force of Messengill had been trying to get raises for three years without any success. Then they joined the OEU and the local now announces increases as follows: Typists and junior clerks \$7 per week, Stenographers \$7 per week, Book-keeping Machine Operators \$12 per week, and Head Clerk \$10 per week! They also got for the first time paid vacations, sick leave, and overtime pay.

Office Workers Win Back Pay

Last month the National Delivery Association, Inc., a Washington, D. C., concern engaged in long-distance hauling, consented to a decree for the payment of back wages for overtime worked by its office employees. Justice David A. Pine of the District Court signed the decree which ended an action brought by the Wage and Hour Division of the Labor Department against this concern because of its failure to pay its office workers time and one-half for all hours worked in excess of 40 per week.

47 New Applicants Approved

The November meeting approved a record large group of 47 new applicants for membership. A number of the approved applicants were initiated by President Hutchings that evening.

All of the newly elected officers of our local were duly installed in their respective offices during the November meeting.

MEMBERS BUYING DEFENSE BONDS

A novel method of defense bond purchase has been invoked by 18 of our members employed in the general headquarters office of the United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters. Conducted by Sister Irene Boyce, 18 members each contribute \$1.00 per week and the one who pulls the longest straw gets the bond that week. Sister Elizabeth McNulla was the winner of the first week's bond.

December Jack Pot Is \$6.00

Once again the lucky member was not present when her name was drawn for the \$4 jack pot at the November meeting. Sister Edna Jarboe of the Bookbinders office, whose name was drawn, was not present. The jack pot for the December meeting, therefore, contains \$6. Some lucky member will pick up some extra Christmas shopping money if he or she is present at the drawing at the conclusion of the meeting on December 2.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, Dec. 2, 1941

8:00 P. M.

Chantilly Room

HAMILTON HOTEL

A. F. of L. Convention Report

13 MORE OEU LOCALS CHARTERED

The November issue of The American Federationist announces that 13 more office employe local unions have been chartered by the A. F. of L. in recent weeks.

We have more than 115 OEU locals located throughout 34 states, Alaska, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Canada.

The new OEU locals announced in the November Federationist include locals:

- 22868 at Knoxville, Tenn.
- 22875 at Eau Claire, Wis.
- 22891 at New Orleans, La.
- 22895 at Sandusky, Ohio.
- 22899 at Hiwassee Dam, N. C.
- 22900 at Marshfield, Oreg.
- 22904 at Memphis, Tenn.
- 22906 at Louisville, Ky.
- 22913 at Morenci, Ariz.
- 22916 at Port Angeles, Wash.
- 22926 at Coffeyville, Kans.
- 22931 at Kodiak, Alaska.
- 22960 at Racine, Wis.

We salute these 13 new sister locals and are pleased to have them take their place in our ever increasing body of organized office workers. The continuous increase in number of OEU locals spells out more clearly than anything else could, the fact that office workers from coast to coast are awakening to the advantages of organization under the great banner of the American Federation of Labor.

High Court Reviews Overtime Case

The Supreme Court is now reviewing a Wage and Hour Act case to determine whether an employer can compute overtime on the basis of an arbitrarily selected hourly wage rate or whether he is bound to pay one and one-half times the actual average wage rate. If the court permits employers to compute overtime on the arbitrary basis, employers will be able to substantially increase the work week without paying anything above the normal wage rate. Office workers are particularly subject to this kind of practice unless they are protected by union membership and a union agreement.

Our Union Is As Good As We Make It

THE OFFICE EMPLOYEES LETTER

Published Monthly by

OFFICE EMPLOYEES UNION No. 11773

Chartered Oct. 3, 1904, by the A. F. of L.

208 National Union Building

Washington, D. C.

W. R. Probey.....Business Representative

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| PAUL R. HUTCHINGS..... | President |
| W. R. PROBEY..... | 1st Vice President |
| AUGUST TERNEAK..... | 2nd Vice President |
| ERNEST H. HINKINS..... | 3rd Vice President |
| HELEN H. ELLIS..... | Financial Secretary |
| IRENE BRUNGART..... | Recording Secretary |
| ESTHER G. SMITH..... | Treasurer |

MEMBERS, TAKE NOTICE

It is again necessary to remind the membership that dues should be paid to the shop stewards or at the regular monthly meeting. It is not fair to our Financial Secretary or to her employer to bring OEU dues in to her at her employer's office during working hours. If for any reason a member desires to pay dues directly to Financial Secretary Ellis between meetings or between shop steward collections, such dues should be mailed to the Financial Secretary.

Officers to Attend Walker Testimonial Dinner

The regular November meeting voted to send the members of the Executive Committee to the testimonial dinner being given for Brother Fred S. Walker at the Mayflower Hotel on November 27. The dinner is in honor of Brother Walker who for many years has been active in the labor movement in Washington. Brother Walker is business manager of the Trades Unionist, and an officer of our Central Labor Union. He is also the labor member of the D. C. Minimum Wage Board.

NEWS FROM OTHER LOCALS

Milwaukee Local Strides Forward

Local 16456 at Milwaukee announces the signing of an agreement with the Herbst Shoe Manufacturing Co. of that city. Wage increases of \$3.00 per week were won for all office workers, who also have gained a union shop, vacations with pay, sick leave, and seniority rights. Herbst Shoe is now the one Milwaukee shoe manufacturer with a 100 per cent organized shop. Boot and Shoe Workers Local 170 also has a closed shop agreement with the company.

The Milwaukee local signed an all-union agreement with the Eagles Club of that city on October 10. The agreement pro-

vides for substantial wage increases, the 40 hour week, vacations, seniority and other benefits.

Working jointly with the Retail Clerks Union, the Milwaukee local is engaging in an organizing drive among the employes of Gimbel Bros. department store. A petition for bargaining rights for these workers has been filed with the Wisconsin Employment Relations Board requesting that an election be held.

San Francisco Local Wins Gains

Local 21230 at San Francisco announces that two new union shop agreements have recently been signed. The two union shop agreements are with the Shumate Drug Co. and with the drug industry.

The Shumate contract reduces hours to 40 per week to be worked on 5 days, establishes overtime payments, paid vacations and holidays, union shop, and wage increases.

The drug industry agreement includes outstanding improvements over the former agreement. Especially significant is the requirement of union membership for all covered employes and substantial salary increases for all which average about 12 per cent.

San Francisco Local 21320 announces the settlement of its dispute with the Mohawk Oil Co. of that city with the signing of an agreement with the company covering its office staff. A 40-hour work week was established, previously 44 hours had prevailed. Also working days were cut from 5½ to 5 per week.

OEU Western Council Meets At Tacoma

On October 4 and 5 the Western Council of Office Workers, composed of delegates from West Coast OEU locals, met in Tacoma. Our convention delegate, Brother Probey, was invited to sit in on the October 5 meeting. Sister Johnson of the Minneapolis local also sat in the meetings. Brother Probey reports that it was an active and interesting meeting. Most of the discussions centered upon the resolutions before the A. F. of L. convention to establish an international charter for Office Workers.

Sheffield Local Gets New Office

Sheffield Local 22501 in its new monthly bulletin "Briefs" announces the opening of their new office in the Galloway Building in that city.

This local has 60 members employed

by the TVA and is now engaged in a campaign to increase its membership in the TVA which employs 220 office workers at this city. The Sheffield local is also putting on a drive among the office force of Reynolds Metals Co. plant at Sheffield.

Miss Ericson's Talk Enjoyed

About 75 members were present at the November meeting to hear Miss Ethel Ericson of the Women's Bureau, U. S. Labor Department. Miss Ericson took the place of Women's Bureau Director, Miss Mary Anderson, who was scheduled to speak, but was unable to appear because of a severe cold.

Miss Ericson discussed the study of white collar workers which is shortly to be released by the Women's Bureau. At the close of her speech, Miss Ericson kindly consented to participate in a question period.

Employers Warned to Hike Pay of Office Workers to Forestall Organization

During the last week in October the American Management Association conducted a conference on office management in New York City.

Professor Brecht of the University of Pennsylvania warned the conference that "the belief that office workers think and act as an essential part of management still persists in certain quarters, and is naively dangerous. Over an increasing area, office unionization is demonstrating the falseness of this assumption. The interests of the office worker are not best served by ignoring necessary readjustments in his remuneration because of the absence of any organized pressure on his part."

The remarks of Professor Brecht in effect warn employers that office workers are awakening to the benefits they can derive from organization and that it, therefore, is wise for employers to give wage increases to their office workers in order to forestall organization.

The Hospitality Committee announced that a group of members will eat dinner at the Hamilton Hotel coffee shop on December 2 before the regular meeting. Any members dining downtown that night are invited to join the group at the coffee shop after 6 p. m.

Keep 'em Flying--Buy Defense Bonds and Stamps