



WHITE COLLAR

OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, AFL-CIO AND CLC

No. 498

Issue 2, Spring 2007

Local 6 Prevails in Raid Battle with Rival Union

An attempt by the National Association of Government Employees (NAGE) to steal 3,600 trial court members away from Local 6 in Quincy, Massachusetts has failed.

Mary Mahoney, OPEIU Region II vice president and president of Local 6, which represents the professional and administrative employees within the trial court system of Massachusetts, announced that NAGE had abandoned its efforts to lure away her mem-

bers. She credited her membership for its solidarity and loyalty and added, "We have always done better for our members than NAGE has for theirs. I am obviously pleased that our members spoke loud and clear and strongly supported Local 6. We are the better choice for them."

At stake potentially was which union would represent the 3,600 employees. Local 6 and NAGE both represent different segments within the trial court of



Mary Mahoney

Massachusetts. NAGE aggressively campaigned this past year to convince OPEIU members that they should defect.

Mahoney, who worked for more than 25 years in the trial court herself before assuming the presidency of the union, said Local 6 had mounted a strong informational campaign for its members, comparing their record of performance against NAGE. "While we deplore the tactics that NAGE used, we know that we would have prevailed in an election against them because our record of delivering for our members and our integrity is vastly superior."

She added, "We did not sink to their level, nor would we. We do not believe in raids or the

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OPEIU To Hold 24th Triennial Convention

Delegates from more than 100 local unions throughout the United States will convene June 18-21, 2007 in Las Vegas, Nevada for the International Union's 24th Triennial Convention.

The convention's theme will be "It Pays to Belong," and will emphasize the many benefits of OPEIU membership and the need to spread that message to the unorganized in our industries.

Convention delegates will work in committees and on the convention floor to determine the union's policies and agenda for the next three years.

The delegates, elected by their Local Union memberships, will represent the interests of members on issues related to organizing, health coverage, and many other issues, and will provide direction for the future. They will also represent the members as they elect the International Union officers who will lead the union for the next three-year term of office.

A full report of the convention discussions, decisions and activities will appear in the *White Collar* following the convention.

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Editorial



2007 Convention — *It Pays To Belong!*

By Michael Goodwin, International President

The officers and staff of the International Union are busy preparing for our convention to be held June 18-21, 2007 at the Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Wohlforth has sent out the convention call and credentials to all Local Unions. Each Local Union is entitled to have one delegate for each one hundred (100) members, or major fraction thereof up to a maximum of five (5) delegates, on which per capita tax has been paid for the 12-month period April 2006 through March 2007. Local Unions may also send alternate delegates, observers, and guests to the convention.

On March 5, 2007, Secretary-Treasurer Wohlforth also sent instructions for the election of delegates and alternates to the convention. Please remember that each delegate or alternate delegate shall be selected by vote of the Local Union.

However, if a Local Union constitution and bylaws provides that an elected officer or officers are to be delegates or alternate delegates to the convention by virtue of their office, then a new election of those delegates or alternate delegates is not necessary, providing that the membership was notified at the time of the nomination and election of such officer or officers that they are also electing the delegates or alternate delegates to the convention. If such notice was not given at the time of the nomination and election of the officer or officers, even when the constitution and bylaws states that they are to be delegates, then a separate election of delegates or alternate delegates is required.

Each delegate or alternate delegate must be in continuous good standing with the Local Union for at least twelve (12) months prior to the convening of the convention, with separate provisions for Local Unions functioning for less than twelve (12) months.

This year, distribution of monies from the convention fund to Local Unions participating in the convention will be based on the revised formula adopted at the 2004 convention, which provides that fifty percent (50%) of the fund shall be equally divided among all such Local Unions and the balance of fifty percent (50%) of the fund shall be divided by the total number of straight map miles between the charter city of the Local Union and the convention city. This new formula has resulted in a more equitable distribution of the convention fund monies, eliminating previous situations where a Local Union located relatively near the convention city would not receive much support. Now, such a Local Union is guaranteed an equal share in at least fifty percent (50%) of the fund.

Delegates may be assigned to one or more of the various con-

vention committees in accordance with the constitution. Convention committee meetings are planned for the morning of Sunday, June 17, 2007, except that delegates assigned to the Rules or Program committees may be required to arrive earlier. If you are assigned to the Rules or Program committee, you will be notified of the date and time of those meetings so that travel plans can be made. The following committee chairs have been appointed:

Constitution and Laws: Vice Presidents Richard Lanigan and Theresa Kandt

Legislation: Vice Presidents Phillip Pope and Mary Mahoney

Official Publications: Vice Presidents Julie Weir and Judith Zenk

Organization: Vice Presidents Dan Dyer, Christine Page and Local 8 Secretary-Treasurer/Organizing Director Cindy Schu

Program: Vice Presidents Walter Allen Jr. and Green Lewis

Publicity: Vice Presidents John A. Mattiacci and Tamara Rubyn

Resolutions: Vice Presidents Becky Turner, Aaron Sanders and Anita Roy

Rules: Vice Presidents John Conley and Patricia Priloh
Chairpersons of the Officers Reports, Elections, Tellers, and Sergeant-at-Arms committees will be announced later.

Local Unions submitting resolutions, petitions, memorials, or appeals to be considered by the convention, must submit them to Secretary-Treasurer Wohlforth no later than May 29, 2007, preferably by e-mail to opeiu@opeiudc.org. Please keep in mind that submission of memorials in remembrance of deceased members should be limited to officers and activist members of the Local Union. It is not necessary to submit a list of every member who passed away during the last three years since they will be remembered as a group.

The issues to be considered by this convention are extremely important to the future of the organization. One of the highlights will be expansion of OPEIU's membership benefits program, which has been applied to eight Local Unions located in right-to-work states. The program is designed to encourage employees represented by the union, who are not members, to join. Most of these employees usually don't join because they don't have to under right-to-work state laws. As we discuss this matter at the convention, all delegates will learn much more about the program and how it can be applied to their Local Union.

I look forward to seeing all Local Union delegates at the convention in June!

OPEIU Makes Great Strides in Puerto Rico

In the past two and a half years, OPEIU has made great strides toward bringing worker protections and a living wage to workers in Puerto Rico. Most recently, more than 180 clerical workers from ASG (Administración de Servicios Generales), the equivalent of the General Services Administration stateside, signed a collective bargaining agreement with OPEIU. “This is our biggest unit to date in Puerto Rico,” said Kevin Kistler, OPEIU Director of Organization and Field Services. “We’ve had some great victories in Puerto Rico in a short period of time and we’re looking forward to more.”

Workers covered in this latest collective bargaining agreement are professional, construction and technical workers employed by the ASG. “We did our research beforehand,” said Iram Ramirez, OPEIU organizer. “The ASG was one of the few public agencies in Puerto Rico that was not organized and not receiving the wages and benefits that were due them. Now, they can look forward to everything that a collective bargaining agreement can offer.”

The campaign to organize the ASG began three years ago, with leafletting outside the agency’s headquarters. “We began by passing out leaflets at the end of the workday that described all of the benefits they were missing, that other public employees were privy to,” Ramirez said. “That led to small meetings at lunchtime and more meetings after working hours. The campaign lasted for a long time, but from the time we had the petition and cards collected for more than 200 workers to the time we filed for elec-

tion certification, only two months had passed. Once they decided they wanted in, we got it done. It was a long process overall, but worth it in the end,” Ramirez said.

The process for organizing in Puerto Rico, although technically the same as in the U.S., presents many challenges. Ramirez described an environment where “many people are afraid of unions. Unions were outlawed here for so long and organizers were prosecuted by the government. You just whisper the word ‘organize’ and people run away.” But the times are slowly changing. Where unions have been a rich part of America’s history, they are becoming more and more the norm in Puerto Rico. “It’s been a hard road in Puerto Rico,” Kistler said. “Stateside, people are more accustomed to being involved with unions. In Puerto Rico, unions are fewer.”

The new members of OPEIU have an excellent contract. Highlights of the contract include provisions that were designed to make life for the employees just a little bit better — and a little bit easier — while protecting their inalienable rights as a member of the union. They now have a system where grievances can be heard, and where neutrality can be maintained.

In Puerto Rico, it’s against the law for public workers to strike. Last summer, when nearly 100,000 public employees were locked out of their jobs for two weeks due to a budget battle in the legislature, OPEIU was able to negotiate a “no lockout” clause into the ASG contract to prevent it from happening again.

Traditionally, public employees in Puerto

Rico are only given 15 days “vacation” to be used to cover days when the worker is sick, an emergency at home, doctor appointments, etc. Under the new contract, workers are given days off for maternity leave; three hours per semester to visit their child at school for parent/teacher conferences, plays, etc.; two days if they are involved in a domestic violence dispute; five days of paid leave if they have a special needs child; a half-day to donate blood; one day to attend educational seminars; and continued benefits to an employee who wants to take off time for higher education. As for actual vacation days, they now have 30 days!

And the benefits don’t stop there. If a member chooses to take a position with the union, he or she is able to take two years of unpaid leave to work for the union. After two years, their job will be waiting for them.

In June 2007, the government of Puerto Rico will be adopting a new budget, at which time the workers will go back to the bargaining table to negotiate higher wages. “We couldn’t do anything for the time being regarding a wage increase due to the budget schedule of the government,” Ramirez said. “But we will tackle this later. In the interim, however, we were able to get new employees a \$500 signing bonus, more vacation and stronger licenses for their contract. And we’re not finished yet.” Ramirez went on to explain that this is also one of the most progressive contracts in Puerto Rico. “We have a clause that stipulates the employer cannot discriminate against any employee based on sexual preference. This is a first of what I hope is many progressive clauses for our members.”

OPEIU is making great inroads throughout Puerto Rico, with Local 4873 having organized workers from the Avance Head Start Program, the Milk Industry Council and the Higher Education Council, to name a few. “Getting the word out there about the benefits of membership in the union is our goal,” Kistler concluded. “The benefits sell themselves. And the more workers learn about us, the better. Our numbers make us strong and we’re proud of what we won for the workers of the ASG. We’re ready to do more.” The new group will be members of Local 153, which also represents employees of Horizon Lines, headquartered in Puerto Rico.



ASG Administrator Gil Rodriguez (seated, second from left) and OPEIU Organizer Iram Ramirez (seated, right) are joined by the employer and union bargaining committee at the contract signing.

Bohelski and Nuber Named Senior International Representatives

Paul Bohelski and Gary Nuber have been named Senior International Representatives in recognition of their outstanding work servicing OPEIU members.

“Paul and Gary have been invaluable to OPEIU’s efforts to service our members,” International President Michael Goodwin said. “Servicing our members and addressing their needs is a top priority; Paul and Gary and the other International Union staff are the key to this effort. They are on the front lines, and right in the middle of all the activity.”

Bohelski joined OPEIU, Local 277 in Fort Worth, Texas in 1997 and has served as an International Representative based in Region IV. He brings 25 years of experience in the labor movement, and has been instrumental in servicing helicopter pilots and flight instructors. In his time with OPEIU, he has negotiated contracts with Air Logistics, PHI, Air Methods and others.

Nuber began his tenure with OPEIU as



Paul Bohelski

a business agent for OPEIU, Local 95 in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, and for the next five years he was involved in both private and public sector collective bargaining, as well as grievance handling, mediation, preparation and presentation of arbitration



Gary Nuber

cases, legal and arbitral research, union operations and all aspects of membership servicing. Prior to his appointment as Senior International Representative in January, Nuber was an International Representative servicing the membership of Region VII.

OPEIU Adopts Diversity Principles

OPEIU has always been committed to diversity in leadership, with more women on the OPEIU Executive Board than most other unions within the AFL-CIO. OPEIU also promotes diversity within Local Union leadership and the membership.

To that end, OPEIU has formally adopted the following principles set forth by the AFL-CIO:

■ The union will work, to the maximum extent allowable by law, to promote diversity in the leadership of the union, at every level within the union structure, so that the leadership reflects the diversity of its membership. In order to accomplish this goal:

- The union will ensure that women and people of color have a voice in the direction and decisions of the union;
- Paths to leadership, including mentoring programs, training, apprenticeships, and internships, for women, people of color, and

lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) workers also shall be provided; and

- The union will identify and implement other measures to promote diversity in the leadership of the union at every level, including on its governing bodies.

■ The union commits itself to equal employment opportunity and reaffirms the importance and benefits of a diverse workforce that is inclusive of women, people of color, and LGBT workers at all levels within the union. The union will engage in outreach, training, leadership development, and other efforts to advance these goals.

■ To ensure that the principle of equal pay for equal work is applied within the union without regard to gender or race, the union recommitment itself to implementing pay equity at every level within the union structure.

■ The union will identify and implement measures to promote diversity that



Nancy Wohlforth, President of Pride at Work (PAW) and International Union Secretary-Treasurer. Nancy is also a member of the prestigious AFL-CIO Executive Council.

reflects the membership of the union among the delegates to the International Union convention.

■ Demographic data on union members, staff, and leadership shall be collected to facilitate programs of — and commitments to — full inclusion set forth above.

Union Protests Gas Rate Hike to Raise Outsourcing Issue

Local 2 in Washington, D.C. recently filed to intervene in a rate hike request by the Washington Gas Light Co., saying it planned to protest the proposal out of concern that the company may hire outside contractors to replace customer service workers, which the union represents.

The company requested a rate increase of 7.7 percent in December with the District's Public Service Commission and in September with Virginia regulators.

Of the almost 300 customer service employees who work in the Springfield, Virginia and Washington, D.C. call centers, more than half could lose their jobs, said Dan Dyer, OPEIU Region II Vice President and Local 2 President. "Our members are highly trained and experienced to take emergency calls if there's a leak, if you want to adjust a bill, and they are all people who live and work in the community," he said. "What ends up happening is this work will be outsourced to a call center located who knows

where, with workers without union representation."

During the next two months, Local 2 plans a series of actions to publicize its opposition to Washington Gas Light Co.'s request for a rate increase and to outsourcing, Dyer said.

Local 2 will take out advertisements on radio and in print, contact local politicians and circulate petitions in the community. It also hopes to appear before the Public Service Commission in upcoming hearings.

Local 2 represents more than 6,000 members in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.



Dan Dyer

AFL-CIO Union Privilege Recognizes OPEIU Diversity

Editor's Note: This is an actual reproduction of a booklet published by the Union Privilege program.

OPEIU



Becky Turner

Shattering the Glass Ceiling from Above

In 1995, delegates at the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) convention had passed a strong policy statement on diversity. Following the convention, the union's top leadership decided to make a serious push to bring more women into leadership.

New International President Michael Goodwin appointed three women as ad hoc members of the International Executive Board (IEB), giving them a voice—but no vote—at meetings. This gave additional women insight into the workings of the board and helped open up the meetings.

Those actions lead to big changes.

When the union's 1998 convention opened, only three of the 19 members of the IEB from the United States were women.

When that convention of this predominantly female union adjourned a few days later, there was a female majority on the newly elected executive board.

And two important changes to the union constitution were developed, circulated, debated and ultimately passed in 1998.

First, rather than having the entire convention vote on a slate of officers, the constitution now called for an electoral system in which only delegates from each region elect their IEB representatives.

The second change established diversity seats on the IEB to be filled only after the results of the region-by-region elections were announced.

The impact on the union was powerful. "Our members can now identify more readily with the face of our International Executive Board," says Becky Turner, who became the first female business manager of her local in 2002 and joined the IEB that same year.

"When these changes were made, it sent a strong message that our union was being led by people who understood the problems of working women," she says.

"And it's being led by a group of people who are more like the membership," adds Tamara Rubyn, also the top officer in her local and an IEB member. "Since the changes, I've felt stronger as a leader and my sense of responsibility has grown."

Rubyn also notes that the message of inclusiveness has given organizing in California a lift: "Not only do we have so many female leaders, but there's also room for lesbians—like Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Wohlforth and me—in the top leadership."

"We are very proud that our union acted and mandated change at the top," Rubyn says. "It made our union more able to face the future."



Tamara Rubyn

First Annual Local 30 “Evening With The Stars” Awards Banquet

Chairperson Sue Smith and the Awards and Recognition Committee, combined with the Events Committee chaired by Vice President Cathy Young, worked diligently to hold Local 30’s First Annual Awards Banquet on January 20.

“If this was the first event, I can’t wait to see future events,” said Robert Sparrow, an x-ray technologist at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center. “I’m not sure how Local 30

can top this one!” Bryant Hyatt-Darris from the California Service Center, who accepted an award on behalf of Mark Englehart also from the California Service Center, stated how proud he was to be a part of the event that “recognizes the members of Local 30 and their contributions to its success.”

Awards presented included the Michael Goodwin Award for Outstanding Achievement, Gwen Newton Award, Service Awards, New

Direction Award and Team Award. Office Appreciation and Scholarship awards were also given to the staff and members of Local 30.

International President Michael Goodwin, who attended the event, said he was honored to have the top achievement award named for him. Goodwin also expressed how he could feel and see the commitment of everyone in the room to each other and to their union.

HAPPY AWARD WINNERS — TRUE LOCAL 30 STARS!



Local 30 President Marianne Giordano



Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer Walter Allen Jr. and Joy Kennedy



Eddie Taylor and Sue Smith



Jean Davis, the oldest member of Local 30.



Elizabeth Rosenthal



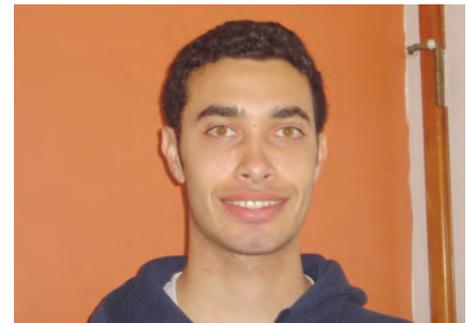
Natasha Klostermann



Josie Bramhall



Brian Wagoner



Noah Gutierrez

Local 29 Nurses Strike American Red Cross

The members of Local 29 in Oakland, California, employed by the American Red Cross have ratified a new three-year contract, securing annual 3.5 percent wage increases and a \$600 signing bonus.

The agreement was reached through

federal mediation and comes after nearly a dozen nurses and one reference technologist went on a seven-day strike from November 27 through December 3, 2006, picketing at four of the Northern California blood centers in protest for a new contract, reported Region V Vice

President and Local 29 President/Business Manager Tamara Rubyn. The nurses had been negotiating for six months and had rejected the employer's "last, best, and final offer" on three separate occasions, voting strike authorization each time.



Local 29 proudly rallies with striking Red Cross nurses and reference technologists. Pictured are: Sue Houseal, Nora Montanjees, Cindy Conrad and her husband Curtis, Ping Lee, Kwai Nishi, Caroline Howe, Mary Mueller, Karl Keinz, Nikki Weismehl, Linda Farrelly, Mona Farzaneh, and Sandy Shea, with union organizer Bill Klinke, Business Representative Terry Keller, Secretary-Treasurer Pat Sanchez, and (kneeling) Vice President Geoffrey Gamble and President/Business Manager Tamara Rubyn.

Local 251 Officials Receive Award

Sue Rivas, President of Local 251 and Amy Cogswell, Vice President, were awarded the President's Quality Award at Sandia National Laboratories for their work (as part of a team) with the Behavior Based Safety (BBS) programs at the Laboratories.

At Sandia, the President's Quality Award (Gold) is a prestigious award for employee accomplishment that is awarded to work teams for their mission accomplishment. This is the second President's Award for Rivas. BBS is a relatively new safety program at the Laboratories; it doesn't replace traditional safety efforts, but complements them by focusing on personal behavior and positive coaching. BBS is a proactive approach to safety, which uses coaching and observation data to prevent injuries before they occur. Recent statistical data shows dramatic decreases in recordable injuries and severity of injuries. Local 251 and other unions at the Laboratories have been supportive of the BBS effort since its inception.



Amy Cogswell (center) is pictured delivering a safety speech to an auditorium of lab employees. At left is Barbara Cochran, a manager on the Local 251 team, and at right is Debra Yzquierdo-Trujillo, an OPEIU member who worked on the team.

First Union Contract for Helicopter Pilots in Canada

February 1, 2007 was an historic day for some pilots in Canada, as it was the first day, and the first time ever, that their rights as workers were covered under a private sector collective bargaining agreement. The celebrated signing took place at the headquarters of Canadian Helicopters Limited (CHL) in Les Cedres, Québec although the agreement covers pilots employed by CHL under contract to the Ontario and Nova Scotia provincial governments. The pilots are licensed to fly under Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) and carry personnel in an S-76 aircraft, providing emergency medical services to the public.

OPEIU represents Captains and First Officers in accordance with a certification issued by the Canadian Industrial Relations Board (CIRB). Collective bargaining began in January 2006, leading to the seminal agree-

ment that provides general wage increases of 22 percent; 10 percent retroactive to December 1, 2006 with increases of 3 percent, 3 percent and 6 percent on each succeeding December 1; base pay scales and automatic monthly allowances that will raise top wages for Captains to \$94,727 and \$63,624 for First Officers; a first-time paid lunchtime equivalent to more than 7 percent in additional wage increases; improvements in holiday pay; a \$1,500 signing bonus for each pilot; unique language providing employment protection for pilots serving in Canada's Military Reserve; and other improvements in overtime payments, increased allowances and bonuses, as well as improved vacation selections and uniform allowances.

The contract signing was attended by International President Michael Goodwin, Director of Organization and Field Services

Kevin Kistler, CHL Vice President, Human Resources Claude Payette and Vice President and General Manager Rob Blakely.

A second signing was held with the full committee present on March 14 in Toronto, Ontario.

"We are absolutely delighted with this historic agreement, which joins CHL pilots with more than 4,000 pilots who are members of OPEIU in the United States and around the world," Goodwin said. CHL pilots will also join OPEIU's Professional Helicopter Pilots Association (PHPA) based in Daleville, Alabama. PHPA President Butch Grafton said, "I look forward to welcoming the CHL pilots to our organization and to their participation."

The union negotiating committee consisted of Captains Gerry MacKay, Darshan Nair and Al Morden and First Officer Bruce Wade. The contract expires on November 30, 2010.



International President Michael Goodwin tries his hands as "Pilot in Command." Kevin Kistler is "First Officer."



Left to right (front row) are Jerry Beatty, Director of Flight Operations; Claude Payette, Vice President, Human Resources; Rob Blakely, Vice President and General Manager; (back row) Larry Kopechanski, OPEIU Representative; Bruce Wade, First Officer; Gerry MacKay, Captain; Al Morden, Captain; Michael Goodwin, International President; Darshan Nair, Captain; and Kevin Kistler, Director of Organization and Field Services.



Left to right: Darshan Nair, Jerry Beatty, Ivano Andriani, Bruce Wade, Caroline Levesque, Al Morden, Claude Payette, Kevin Kistler, Gerry MacKay, Michael Goodwin and Larry Kopechanski.



Pictured left to right are the union bargaining committee (bottom) Bruce Wade, Kevin Kistler, Larry Kopechanski, (top) Al Morden, Gerry MacKay and Darshan Nair.

Perks Card Well Received

The newest membership benefit, the PerksCard, has been well received by members, reported Region II Vice President and Local 153 Secretary-Treasurer Richard Lanigan.

The union provides a number of membership benefits provided at no additional cost to the members, and the PerksCard is the newest benefit, he said. Lanigan stated members have reported that the new benefit is an excellent way to save money on various purchases, quoting a member who said, "I saved \$24 this month when I took my family to the movies," and who added that she also saved \$20 more when she and her children went out to eat before the movies.



Lanigan reported that one of the best features of

the PerksCard is the broad range of discounts that are available, including travel discounts, movie rentals, dining, clothing and price breaks on flowers, gifts and thousands of retail items. One of the most popular savings is through Overstock.com, where members receive an additional 10 percent discount over and above the traditional low prices, he said.

The International Union Executive Board reviewed the PerksCard program with a presentation at its January 2007 meeting. Several local unions also expressed an interest in purchasing the PerksCard for their members.

Additional information will be provided in subsequent issues of *White Collar*.



Richard Lanigan

PHI Pilots Returning to Work

On January 11, 2007, an agreement was reached in federal court between PHI, OPEIU and Local 108 that provided procedures for 90 striking pilots to return to work. OPEIU and Local 108, which represent the pilots, made an unconditional offer to return to work on November 10, 2006, but the company failed to fully implement the unions' offer, leading to the January agreement. Pilots went on strike on September 20, 2006, after two-and-a-half years of negotiations failed to produce a new agreement.

Under the terms of the January 11 court agreement, 30 pilots who called the company as of January 11 and offered to return to work were returned by January 29. The remaining 60 pilots will be returned to work with a phase-in process, expected to be complete within 90 days.

The process will ensure that pilots will be returned to work in order of seniority based on aircraft types. Returning pilots also won't be required to sign the "Individual Unconditional Return to Work Agreement," proffered by the company and not yet resolved as this issue went to press that includes a no-strike pledge. There is no effective no-strike

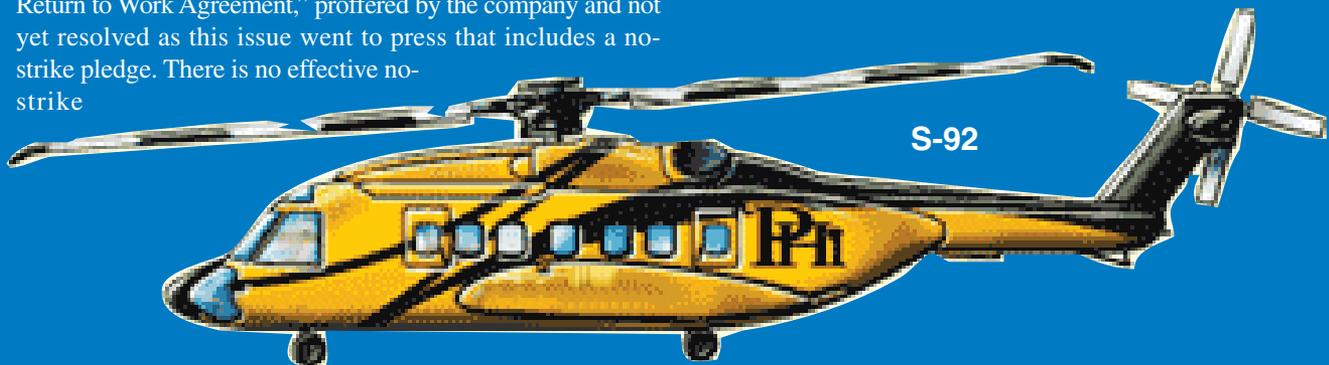


bar in PHI's unilateral-ly implemented terms of employment,

although the company argues otherwise.

All issues concerning back pay or pilots who were not returned to work in the appropriate seniority order will be resolved in the federal court lawsuit, which is scheduled for trial on November 7, 2007.

A status conference in that case involving lawyers and principals for the parties was held on March 23, 2007 before Federal District Court Judge Rebecca Doherty. The parties still remain in disagreement on many issues, highlighted by the company's demand that selected pilots take psychological exams before returning to work — a major problem.



Alliance Offers Electronic Health Records Benefit to Taxi and Limo Drivers

Alliance has launched MyMedicalRecords.com, the only fully active, comprehensive online solution for storing personal health records and other vital documents, for members of an alliance between OPEIU and the United Steelworkers, seeking to organize thousands of taxi and limousine drivers in Las Vegas, Nevada.

“This is another tangible benefit that we are sharing with taxi and limousine drivers in Las Vegas,” International President Michael Goodwin said. “Benefits such as MyMedicalRecords.com are not available through their employers, only through the alliance, and this is another incentive that we’re using in our organizing efforts in Las Vegas, and soon to be offered in other areas throughout the country.”

This innovative, user-friendly tool is a giant step forward in saving lives, and for privacy, MyMedicalRecords.com features a special emergency login that gives authorized health care professionals access to medical information that the member pre-selects for use in an emergency situation. It will also reduce health care costs by eliminating duplication of tests ordered by various health care providers.

And the company recently added Dick Gephardt, former House of Representatives Majority Leader, and twice a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, to its Board of Advisors. While working in Congress, Gephardt repeatedly reached across the aisle to enact policies that promoted the economic security and health of working Americans.

“Dick Gephardt is one of America’s most respected public leaders,” said Robert H. Lorsch, chairman and CEO of MyMedicalRecords.com. “He is an expert in economic affairs

and health care. The addition of Dick Gephardt to our Board of Advisors further identifies MyMedicalRecords.com as a leading provider of electronic health records that clearly enjoys growing bipartisan support. We welcome his contributions and we share his commitment for a program that reaches throughout the labor movement.”

“Unions in our country have consistently led the way in establishing programs of benefit to the American family,” Gephardt said. “Health care is of major concern to every labor organization and its members throughout the country. The MyMedicalRecords.com solution empowers Americans to take greater control over their own health, while at the same time safeguarding their privacy.”

The federal government has set the goal for all Americans to have an electronic medical record within seven years, and Congressional leaders on both sides of the aisle are promoting electronic health record legislation in an effort to cut costs, improve care and reduce medical errors that result in at least 97,000 deaths per year using the current paper-based system.

MyMedicalRecords.com meets this goal with a HIPAA-compliant medical file that offers Americans an empowerment tool for greater control over their health care and well-being in an easy-to-use, private and portable solution that can be accessed anytime and from anywhere using an Internet-connected computer.

“MyMedicalRecords.com is fully operational and available today, so there is no reason for working men and women to wait to start saving money and having peace of mind over the location of their essential medical records,” Gephardt said.

For more information, contact the International Union at 212-675-3210 or e-mail frontdesk@opeiu.org.



DO YOU HAVE ACCESS TO...
Medical Records, Wills, Insurance & Financial Documents,
Photos of Family, Pets & Property?



For more information, contact the International Union at 212-675-3210 or e-mail frontdesk@opeiu.org.

Representative Sanchez Pledges Support for EFCA



Representative Loretta Sanchez (D-CA) visits OPEIU headquarters to meet with Director of Organization and Field Services Kevin Kistler to pledge her support for the OPEIU-supported Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). Sanchez represents California’s 47th congressional district.

Miller's Office Workers Reject Contract

Local 35 clerical staff and shipping and receiving employees of the Miller Brewing Co. Milwaukee, Wisconsin headquarters rejected the company's final contract offer that demanded a pension freeze and cutbacks in health care benefits.

The union, which represents 120 employees, has launched a public awareness campaign about the labor dispute, kicking off on January 21 with members distributing leaflets about Miller's contract offer outside Soldier Field before the National Football Conference championship game between the Chicago Bears and New Orleans Saints.

In November, employees voted to authorize a strike if a new labor agreement wasn't reached, but workers have continued to remain on the job.

"The company's pension demand is like asking our members to throw away two or more decades of dedicated and dependable labor," said Judy Burnick, Local 35 Business Manager.

Local 35's members at Miller are mostly women with 20 or more years on the job, which Burnick said is why Miller is targeting their pension plan. A provision in the contract would replace the existing pension plan with a \$2.40 per hour contribution to a savings plan. "Our members have worked for Miller for all these years in anticipation of a secure retirement," Burnick said. "Now the company is seeking to take that security away."

"We know the company has maintained its pension plan with other unions, which have mostly male members. So we are now going to let everyone know about Miller's discrimination against women," Burnick said.

The International Union has been working closely with Local 35 to help resolve the dispute. OPEIU's public relations specialist John Turchiano has been in constant contact with Burnick in planning protest activities.

As this issue went to press, Local 35 was planning leafletting and demonstration activities in Las Vegas in mid-April

during the Miller Brewing company's distributors convention. The contract expired April 2006.



Local 35 members conduct a public awareness campaign about their dispute at Miller Brewing Co. The office workers distribute leaflets outside of Soldier Field in Chicago on January 21, where an NFC playoff game between the Chicago Bears and the New Orleans Saints was played. Local 35 members rejected the company's final contract offer that included a pension freeze and cutbacks in health care benefits.

Workers Memorial Day Renews Fight for Safe Workplaces

On April 28, members of unions of the AFL-CIO, including OPEIU, will observe Workers Memorial Day to remember those who have suffered and died on the job and to renew the fight for safe workplaces. Rallies, marches, observances and other events will be held throughout the country with the theme, "Good Jobs, Safe Jobs, It's Time."

More than three decades ago, Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act, promising every worker the right to a safe job. Unions and our allies have fought hard to make that promise become a reality, winning protections that have saved hundreds of thousands of lives and prevented millions of workplace injuries. Nonetheless, the toll of workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths remains enormous. Each year, thousands of workers are killed, and millions more are injured or diseased because of their jobs.

The fight for safe jobs has gotten harder as the Bush administration, acting on behalf of corporate interests, has refused to address pressing problems. Instead, the administration has moved to roll back and weaken protections. Dozens of important safety rules have been withdrawn. Voluntary compliance has been favored over issuing new protective standards and enforcement.

Now is the time to fight for safer working conditions! Join the fight and participate in Workers Memorial Day observances in your community.

Look for photos and coverage of Workers Memorial Day activities in the next issue of *White Collar*.

WHITE COLLAR

Official Organ of
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INTERNATIONAL UNION
affiliated with the AFL-CIO, CLC
<http://www.opeiu.org>

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WHITE COLLAR (ISSN 0043-4876) is published quarterly by Office and Professional Employees International Union, 1660 L St., N.W., Suite 801, Washington, D.C. 20036. Periodical postage paid at Washington, D.C. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Office and Professional Employees International Union, 1660 L St., N.W., Suite 801, Washington, D.C. 20036.

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Subscription Price \$1 a Year

Dependent Health Care Restored

A misreading of a new law regarding health care benefits disrupted the lives of a number of Local 459 members and their children at Ingham Regional Medical Center (IRMC), but the union fought for and secured the disputed benefits.

In December 2005, Local 459 received a notice from IRMC that it was going to end insurance coverage for employee's dependents that were age 23 to 25. IRMC said that a change in tax law required them to make this change — despite the fact that none of the other 49 employers that Local 459 has contracts with had made such a change. If required by law, every employer would have amended their plans.

The impact of this decision was big, as 90 dependents of IRMC members lost their health insurance coverage in 2006 as a result of this change. Some union members went out and bought other coverage, some exercised their COBRA rights and paid for their own insurance through IRMC and some just went without coverage. Local 459 filed class action grievances on behalf of all union employees.

Throughout the grievance procedure, IRMC pointed to the new federal law, WIF-TRA, but didn't explain how this law required them to drop the older dependents of their employee's families. Every health care plan is governed by a plan document. IRMC produced a health care plan document that supported taking health care away from the dependents. At first, it looked persuasive, but further research showed that it was meaningless — it was a revised document IRMC produced after they had made the change in health care. The plan document was just them retyping their position in another format. The Local 459 Executive Board approved the grievances for arbitration.

A hearing was scheduled with an arbitrator in September 2006. Just days before the hearing, the employer's attorneys contacted Local 459 to say they had reversed their position, as the law created different names for some dependents but allowed employees to claim their children ages 23 to 25. Arbitration was postponed and negotiations dragged out for months regarding restitution.

In December 2006, an agreement was finally reached. The criteria already being

used by IRMC allowed full-time students to be covered up to the age of 23. Additional criteria was added for non full-time students age 18 to 25. IRMC set up a special open enrollment period for all employees. Health care coverage for such dependents is effective January 1, 2007.

To compensate employees whose

dependents were inappropriately taken off the health care in 2006, a fund of \$45,000 was established. Employees who used COBRA to continue their health care will get their money back. If an employee had medical expenses or bought a different plan, they can apply for reimbursement from the fund.



A happy Local 459 family whose daughter's health care was cut by IRMC and restored through the grievance procedure. Pictured (left to right) are Marsha Kalember, an RN at IRMC for 12 years; Karin, a LCC student; Brad Kalember, Special Studies at IRMC for 27 years; and Kristin, an MSU student.

Juliet Casey Welcomes Bundle of Joy!



Congratulations to Juliet Casey, assistant to OPEIU Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Wohlforth, on the arrival of her beautiful daughter, Bella Rose Casey, born February 21, 2007. Weighing 7.4 pounds and measuring 19 inches long, Bella Rose and her mother are doing great! Pictured are parents Tom and Juliet Casey with baby Bella Rose and son Joseph Fisher, age 13.

Legislative Corner

Democrats Come to the Rescue of Workers

Submitted by OPEIU Lobbyist Robert McGlotten of McGlotten & Jarvis

House Passes Employee Free Choice Act; Uncertain Future in Senate

The United States has been a voice for fairness for free and fair elections around the world. But when dealing with workers' elections for fair and free trade unions, it is anything but fair. OPEIU, the AFL-CIO and the entire labor movement have asked Congress to pass a bill that would protect workers who choose to belong to a union.

The new Democratic leadership in Congress has responded to that cry and Rep. George Miller (D-CA), the chairman of Education and Labor Committee, introduced HR-800, the Employee Free Choice Act. The House passed the measure on March 1 by a vote of 241-185. But it faces a more uncertain future in the Senate. The EFCA would:

- Establish stronger penalties for violation of employee rights when workers seek to form a union and during first-contract negotiations;
- Provide mediation and arbitration for first-contract disputes;
- Allow employees to form unions by signing cards authorizing union representation.

Democratic Leadership Keeps Its Promise

The Democratic leadership of the House of Representatives kept its commitment to the American people to pass the following agenda in the first 100 hours in office:

1. Implementing the 9/11 Commission recommendations; the measure passed 299-128
2. Increasing the Minimum Wage; passed 315-116
3. Expanding stem cell research; passed 253-174
4. Allowing negotiations for lower prescription drugs costs; passed 255-170
5. Cutting interest rates on student loans; passed 356-71
6. Ending subsidies for "Big Oil" and investing in renewable energy; passed 264-163

The Senate Democratic leadership passed a Minimum Wage bill, 94-3; however, their bill contains a business tax provision that is not in the House bill. It is currently in the House/Senate conference.

Mental Health Equity Act

Mental health has long been an issue that Congress has paid little attention to. Many workers and their families have gone without the proper treatment because our health care system has not recognized the growing need for mental health and addiction care. Congressmen Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) and Jim Ramstad (R-MN) will go on a nationwide tour to promote "The Campaign to Insure Mental Health and Addiction Equity." Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pension Committee Chairman, Senator Edward Kennedy, approved legislation that requires insurance companies to offer similar coverage and cost for mental health treatment as they do for other medical conditions. The 18-3 vote signaled widespread support across party lines.

Take Action — Your Involvement is More Important Than Ever!

Contact your local representatives. Every letter counts. Every phone call can make a difference. If you prefer to make written contact, OPEIU advises you to either mail or e-mail all correspondence.

If you don't know who your House representative is, the Clerk of the House maintains addresses and phone numbers of all members and committees: Clerk of the House, US Capitol, Room H154, Washington, DC 20515; phone (202) 225-7000; hours 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. The following websites also contain links to congressional directories: <http://www.house.gov/writerep> and <http://www.senate.gov>.

Please direct your questions about communication with your Senators to the specific office(s) in question, using the following format: Office of Senator (Name), United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510. You may also phone the U.S. Capitol's switchboard at (202) 224-3121. An operator will connect you directly with the House or Senate office you request.

You can also access this information at your local library, or call the International Union at 212-675-3210 for a booklet listing of members of the 110th Congress.

Your action is needed now. Do your part to help yourself and your family. Start writing and calling today!

For Mom



Union-member discounts help you **show Mom how much you care!**

This Mother's Day, we're delighted to help you **SAVE** as you show Mom how much she means to you. From flowers and clothing to digital wonders to that dream vacation of a lifetime, check out our website for **great gift ideas** at various price levels. **All available at special discounts**—to support our union members and honor moms everywhere!

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Clothe Mom in style.

- Save up to 10% off the latest quality apparel, union-made in the USA.
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- Plug Mom in with a Dell computer at up to 12% off. Choose from the latest desktops, laptops, printers, and more.
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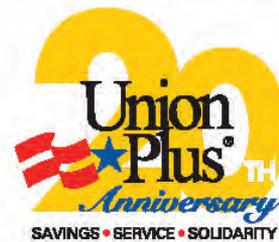
Send Mom cruising.

- Treat Mom to a dream cruise anywhere in the world on Norwegian Cruise Lines at a minimum 5% discount and up to 30% off selected sailings.
- Consider an Hawaiian island itinerary on one of NCL America's US-flagged, all union cruise ships.



Entertain and enlighten her.

- Save up to 40% on movie tickets for Mom.
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For more details and additional gift ideas, visit

www.UnionPlus.org/MothersDay

Work and Health

Nutrition and Physical Activity: A Community Responsibility

Submitted by Jeffrey S. Freed, M.D.

**Associate Professor of Surgery, The Mount Sinai School of Medicine, NYC
OPEIU Local 153 Health Fund Medical Director**

In order to promote health, the American Cancer Society (ACS) publishes a set of guidelines every five years to enhance our chances of a good healthy life. The guidelines have been established by a panel of experts in cancer research, prevention, epidemiology, public health and policy, and as such, represent the most current scientific evidence related to dietary and activity patterns and cancer risk. The ACS guidelines include recommendations for individual choices regarding diet and physical activity patterns, but those choices stem from behaviors recognized among individuals who have not followed previous recommendations, for example, weight loss in those considered overweight. In fact, it is recognized that for most negative behavior patterns like overeating and smoking, a community-wide effort would be of great help in altering these negative patterns. Organizations like OPEIU could have a

major impact in altering the behavior patterns of members.

The ACS guidelines committee has, in view of what they think is an opportunity to be undertaken by communities like OPEIU, stated that efforts are essential to create a social environment that promotes healthy food choices, physical activity and healthy behavior patterns. Therefore, the committee has circulated one key recommendation for community action to accompany the four recommendations for individual choices to reduce cancer risk. This community recommendation recognizes that a supportive social environment is indispensable if individuals are to have genuine opportunities to choose healthy behaviors. The ACS guidelines are consistent with those of the American Heart Association and the American Diabetes Association for prevention of those diseases as well as cancer.

The community is requested to establish educational programs and support

groups to teach and encourage proper diet; to promote physical activity in the form of exercise for at least 30 minutes three or four times per week; to endorse the concept that one's weight be within 10 percent of what is considered ideal; to increase the amount of fruits and vegetables one takes in the diet, while decreasing the fat intake; and of course, to encourage the members of the community to stop smoking!

The bottom line is this: every community benefits from the good health of each of its members. Every day lost to illness and disability affects every member of the community in some way, and that way is always negative. We are in this together. We should make every effort that we can to promote the basic health of every member of OPEIU.

Jeffrey S. Freed, M.D., P.C. specializes in general surgery/proctology. He can be reached via email at jsfmd@aol.com.

Local 6 Prevails in Raid Battle with Rival Union

(Continued from page 1)
tactics that NAGE used.”

Mahoney believes that NAGE abandoned the raid attempt because they were unsuccessful in reaching anywhere near enough members to trigger interest in an election. Traditionally, when a union is negotiating a contract on behalf of its members, there is an open period when a rival union can request an election. In order to do so, the rival needs to collect a requisite number of union cards from the membership. At that point, an election is set and the employees choose which union will represent them.

“We understand that NAGE may have collected a small percentage, and many of those were obtained under false pretenses,” she said. “NAGE was not up front with our members as to what they were really doing. Some mem-

bers were led to believe that signing the cards was simply a request for information, when in fact it was part of a ploy to lure them away from their union. Some of the members who turned over cards demanded that they be returned once they learned of NAGE's true intentions.”

Mahoney further noted that NAGE is now the subject of a raid itself. Last spring, a California union began raiding the healthcare workers that NAGE represents. And more recently, the troubled union has lost the right to represent a number of police departments throughout the Commonwealth, as many have left them for the New England Police Benevolent Association.

The raid attempt caught the attention of many in the labor movement, with the national leadership of the AFL-CIO rebuking

NAGE President David Holway for not honoring an AFL-CIO Solidarity Charter that NAGE had signed indicating that it would not raid other unions. Ultimately, NAGE withdrew its solidarity charter as it became increasingly clear that the AFL-CIO would move to revoke it. Ironically, the absence of the charter opened NAGE up to membership raids from other organizations.

“We are pleased that our trial court members have overwhelmingly chosen to stay with Local 6,” Mahoney said, adding, “We have constantly delivered for our members, and when people saw the tactics that NAGE employed, it didn't take much to see that NAGE could not represent them in a professional manner.” She said that Local 6 will continue in its efforts to show members that they are the union that best represents their interests.

Apply Now for Romeo Corbeil/ Gilles Beaugard Summer Camp!

Now is the time to apply for a spot at the 2007 Romeo Corbeil/Gilles Beaugard Summer Camp, to be held this August at the University of Missouri. Contact the office of Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Wohlforth at (202) 393-4464 for an application, or clip this coupon and fax to (202) 347-0649 and you will be sent one. You can also mail it to: OPEIU Scholarship Applications, 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036.

The camp is now also open to members' grandchildren and any other child that the member is responsible for, including children of domestic partners.

The application deadline has been extended to June 30, 2007. Space at the camp is limited, so don't wait. Apply today!

APPLY NOW FOR A SUMMER CAMP APPLICATION!

Applications can be obtained by visiting OPEIU's website www.opeiu.org or by returning this coupon to: OPEIU Scholarship Applications, 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036, or via fax at (202) 347-0649. For more information about the scholarships, please visit our website at www.opeiu.org.

Please send me the Romeo Corbeil/Gilles Beaugard Summer Camp application!

Name of Applicant _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

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For more details, visit www.UnionPlus.org/Finance

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