Buffalo Blue Cross Unit Wins $3-Million Package

A 24% salary boost plus a cost-of-living allowance were gained by Local 212 in a 33-union agreement, its 585-member clerical unit at Blue Cross/Blue Shield for Western New York in Buffalo, Business Manager Emil Steck reports. An initial 6% salary increase takes effect immediately with additional increases to be paid at 51/2-month intervals. Other 6% increases will be paid in June 1976 and April 1977, with 2% increases scheduled in January 1976, November 1976 and September 1977. According to Steck, the total economic package raises employees’ salaries an average of $1.61 an hour over the life of the agreement for a unit whose membership is more than $3.5 million. The agreement provides full rather than half-holidays on the days before Christmas and New Years and includes an employer-paid dental plan. In addition, the contract calls for improvements in hospitalization, surgical, major medical and prescription drug plans.

Federal mediator George O’Keefe, who participated in the negotiations, says the contract also contains language changes in about 50 or 60 different areas including technological displacement and subcontracting. He added that the contract calls for an investigation to develop a flextime program.

Noting that other health plans have made progress, O’Keefe says that there’s a possibility that the employer would institute flextime on a trial basis.

The new agreement runs to April 25, 1978. OPEIU Vice President Bill Adams assisted in the final phases of the negotiations.

New NLRB Ruling Aids Organizing

Aims at Employers Refusing to Bargain

Employers illegally blocking union organizing drives may find their unfair labor practices classified under a new National Labor Relations Board ruling. In a 4-to-1 decision the NLRB ruled that employers who refuse employers found guilty of refusing to recognize or bargain with a union take effect on the date of the board’s decision, allowing employers to profit by continuing their unfair labor practices during lengthy NLRB proceedings and court appeals.

Presumably, the bargaining remedy order took effect on the date of the board’s decision, allowing employers to profit by continuing their unfair labor practices during lengthy NLRB proceedings and court appeals.

In some instances, this left unremedied an employer’s unilateral changes in working conditions made after a union had established its majority status. This led to the unwanted result that an employer, by committing serious unfair labor practices, could delay the holding of an election indefinitely...and insure himself a substantial period of time until the board issued a remedial order, during which he would not have to deal with a union.”

Signing the majority decision were NLRB Chairman Betty Southard Murphy and Board Members John A. Penello and Howard Jenkins, Jr. Member John H. Fleming concurred and Ralph E. Kennedy dissented.

Kaiser Reopener Yields Solid Gains

Adds 10% Pay Boost, Shift Rate and Longevity Increases

A 10% across-the-board wage increase or a minimum of 40c an hour, a 54¢ increase an hour in the shift differential and a 5¢ an hour longevity increase for employees with 5 or more years of service, in addition to other improvements were gained by Local 443 for its bargaining unit at Kaiser Hospitals Foundation in San Diego, Cal., Regional Director John Kinnick reports. He said these gains highlight a reopener in the first year of a three-year contract. In addition, the employer agreed to designate one full-time bilingual (Spanish-English) employee for each shift at the medical center to provide 24-hour, seven-day coverage with a similar arrangement in each clinic facility during its hours of operation.

Effective October 1, the agreement provides that those so designated shall receive a $475 premium per day period in addition to their regular pay.

It was also agreed to advance the LVN classification to a position midway between Grades 3 and 4, and to make a job study of aide-ordinary and lower positions following the above improvements to be retroactive to July 1, 1975.

The dental plan was improved to a maximum payment of $750 per case and coverage was expanded to dependent children up to age 19.

The Union Bank in Tacoma Signs Initial OPEIU Pact

An initial contract, calling for a union shop plus dues checkoff, has been signed by Local 23 for its new bargaining unit at The Union Bank in Tacoma, Wash., Business Manager Frank E. Fennerty, Jr., reports.

It provides for minimum starting monthly salaries of $515 in the lowest office grade and $730 in the top classification; eight paid holidays; two weeks vacation after one year, three after five, and four after 10 years.

Sick leave of 12 days per year is cumulative to 60 days three days bereavement leave, and maternity leave not to exceed six months. The employer agreed to pay in full for medical, dental and vision care insurance. The initial two-year contract runs to July 1, 1977.

(Continued on Page 4)
Solszenitsyn
Soviet Dissident Warns the West
On Dangers of Detente With U.S.S.R.

Soviet dissident Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Nobel prize-winning Russian author, made an emotional appeal to the West to stop "giving up, giving up," to Communism and to adopt a firm stand for human freedom.

It was Solzhenitsyn's first speech in the U.S. following his arrest and deportation from Soviet Russia last year. He was the guest of honor at a dinner sponsored by the AFL-CIO in Washington, D.C., attended by 2,400 unionists, government officials and representatives of the religious and academic communities.

His second speech, given in New York, attended by 1,000, and sponsored by the N.Y. State Federation of Labor, some of the points he made in the two speeches should interest our members because both were inadequately reported in the media.

Depleting 30 years of concessions by the West to Communism, Solzhenitsyn declared that "the future of any re- treat is no power at all." Identifying himself with his trade union audience, he pointed out that millions of workers in Soviet slave labor camps he worked as a laborer, bricklayer and smelter.

He traced the history of Communism from the October 1918 revolution, with the shooting of workers in Petrograd and the setting up of an independent factory committee, the crushing of strikes in 1921 and the killing of more strikers in 1923. "Strike for better pay or better working conditions were viewed as counter-revolutionary.

"After the revolution, there was never such a thing as a free trade union. He warmly praised "the American Labor Movement," and noted that it was "the first step in the elimination of absolute concepts of morality. It scoffs at any consideration of 'good' or 'evil' as indisputable categories. Communism regards morality to be relative, to be a class matter. Depending on circunstances and the political situation, any act, including murder, even the killing of thousands, could be good or could be bad. It all depends upon class ideology.

Commenting on Angela Davis, Solzhenitsyn said: "Although she didn't have a rough time in this country, she came to re- cognize the terrible character of the West. When Soviet dissidents, including some from Czechoslovakia, asked her if she could help those who are being persecuted by the state, she replied: 'They deserve what they get. Let them remain in prison.' That is the face of Communism. That's the heart of Communism for you.

"And the Communist leaders respect only firmness and have contempt and laugh at persons who continually give in to them.

"Communism has never concealed the fact that it rejects all absolute concepts of morality. It scoffs at any consideration of 'good' or 'evil' as indisputable categories. Communism regards morality to be relative, to be a class matter. Depending on circumstances and the political situation, any act, including murder, even the killing of thousands, could be good or could be bad. It all depends upon class ideology.

Declaring that two processes are occurring in the world today, Solzhenitsyn said: "One is a greater concentration of capital in the U.S.S.R. and in the other Communist countries. The second is the assistance being extended by the West to Communist rulers, a process of concessions, of detente, yielding whole countries.

"Describing the Soviet totalitarian system as "inefficient," he said: "The system makes use of interest loans and technological know-how from the West it should be allowed to stand on its own two feet. What is needed is to have to reduce its military preparations. It will have to abandon the useless space effort and it will have to feed itself and clothe its own people. And the system will be forced to relax."

"We are slaves, but we are striving for freedom. You, however, were born free. If so, why do you help our slave owners?"

"The leaders who created your country never said—let slavery reign right next door, and we will enter into detente with this slavery, so long as it doesn't come over into our country."

"A concentration of world evil, of hatred for humanity, is taking place and it is fully determined to destroy your society. Must you wait until it comes with a crowbar to break through your borders, until the young men of America have to fall defending the borders of your continent?"

Copies of a special issue of the FREE TRADE UNION NEWS, carrying the full story of the meeting and available on request in the following languages: English, Russian, German, French, Spanish and Yiddish, can be obtained by writing to Room 809, 815-16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.
White Collar Unions Step Up Growth

Public Employees Boost Membership; Women Still Lag

Membership in labor unions and other employee associations based in the U.S. climbed to 24.2 million last year, up 4.8% from 23.1 million in 1972, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

The increase was the largest two-year gain reported by the department in 21 years, including associations, which aren’t strictly regarded as unions, in its 39-year history.

White-collar membership of all unions and associations continued to grow, so that 24.3% of all union and company members were white-collar in 1974, up from 22.6% in 1972 and 21.8% in 1970. But membership of women remained stable at about 24.9% of all members, the same as in 1972 and only 1% from 1970.

Those groups defined by the government as “labor unions” in the narrowest sense accounted for 21.6 million of the 24.2 million total, and recorded their greatest two-year growth since 1966-68 period. The union totals gained 700,000 new members, or a 3.4% increase, between 1972 and 1974.

As the unions reported 2.6 million members in 1974, up about 400,000 members, or 10% from their 1972 total of 2.2 million.

A key factor in the increase was a continuing flow of state and local government workers into the various groups. In 1974, unions reported 447,000 more members who worked for the government, 18% more than in 1972.

The AFL-CIO, the nation’s biggest labor federation, represented 78% of all union members in 1974, little changed from the 79% it included in 1972 and the 77% it had in 1970.

HEW Revives Plan to Penalize Strikers
Department May Deny Welfare Benefits in Labor Disputes

The Ford Administration has reopened the old labor-management dispute by proposing regulations that would deny welfare payments to striking workers.

The proposals were posted without public announcement by Casper W. Weinberger on his last day as secretary of Health, Education & Welfare.

The regulation would bar benefits, under the Aid to Families program, to anyone engaged in a supporting activity of the program, to the family of any father excluded by state law from drawing unemployment compensation payments. Only New York and Rhode Island pay jobless benefits to strikers.

The idea has been advocated for years by U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers, who contend that welfare payments give union unfair economic advantage in labor disputes.

It is strongly opposed by organized labor and George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO, who say that children and non-strikers would be harmed.

“Our position that welfare benefits should be available to citizens who are demonstrably in need without regard to the cause,” Meany said in a telegram to the new H.E.W. secretary, F. David Mathews, adding, “We firmly oppose the concept of punishing children because their father is exercising the legal right to strike.”

After public comment is closed on September 8, the department can make it final at any time

The Administration earlier had taken a more moderate position in the controversy, and in 1973 allowed states to determine whether they would pay welfare benefits to strikers’ families which average $292 a month.

The administration in its final position still leaves state legislators the choice of excluding the families of striking workers from public assistance.

School Unit Scores in New Agreement
Major Fringe Benefits, 11% Pay Hike Won in Twin Cities

An 11% across-the-board increase in addition to other fringe benefit improvements were gained in a new one-year contract renegotiated by Oakland School City Local 12 for its bargaining unit at Independent School District B32, Business Manager H. R. Middleman.

He says the new agreement calls for a starting monthly salary of $496 in the lowest grade, rising to a $662 maximum, and a $578 rate in the top grade rising to a $746 maximum.

The School District agreed to pay $180 coverage annually for each full-time single employee and $422 for family coverage in a medical-hospital plan; $5,000 worth of paid life insurance, and $1,000 in term AD&D program. Benefits under the latter plan for employees becoming disabled, because of accident or sickness, after 90 days will be two-thirds of base salary to a $1,000 per month maximum up to age 65.

Other new features are a matern-ity plan, another another going up to six months’ leave in the case of child adoption, and leaves for those who need such personal business during working hours.

Medical Technologists Win $3,500 Each in New Pact

Across-the-board wage gains totaling some $3,500 per individual, in addition to other improved fringe benefits, were gained in a new two-year contract renegotiated by Oakland Local 299 of240 Medical Technologists at Associated Hospitals in the Bay Area, Regional Director John Kinnech reports.

The contract, reached after several months of negotiations and the help of federal mediaiors, covers an estimated 9,000 in an hour, in the first year, and $97, or $56 an hour, in the second.

As of February 1, 1976, the lowest rate in the agreement will be $181 per month and the highest $1,721. On that date, the new pact calls for five weeks’ vacation after 10 years (was 15).

On April 4, 1976, Martin Luther King Commemoration Day becomes an additional paid holiday, and on July 1 next year a 10% improvement in the Pension Plan takes effect. Health-welfare coverage was vastly improved effective July 1, 1975, with sick leave cumulative to 72 days (was 60).

The negotiating team comprised John Kinnick, Local 299 president; Gary Spedowski and Roberta Hipolito (Merrick); Deborah Golden and Carolyn Street (Alta Bates), Billie Bel (Peralta); Bob Dawson and Mas Kyono (Providence); Jacqueline Lum, Marian Franklin and Janet Serni (Herrick), and Irene Torgren and Edward Ramone (Children’s).

OPEIU Canada Membership Shows Gain of 34% in Year

Canada Director Romeo Corbeil reports that OPEIU membership and other pay-per capita payments, in June 1975, totaled 18,211, a net increase of 4,686 or 34%, over the 13,525 total reported at the International Convention in June 1974.

If all the potential members organized, but not yet paying dues, would be 20,612, an increase of 7,087 new members or a 52% gain for Canada since the June 1974 convention.

Wide Gains Over Two Years Won by Madison G&E Unit

Wage boosts ranging from approximately 13.5% in the lowest office grade to 16.7% in the top classification, an extra holiday, improved vacations and health-welfare benefits, were gained by Local 39 in a two-year contract renewal for its bargaining unit at Madison Gas & Electric Company in Madison, Wisc.

Midwest Council Representative Vern Paul reports that in the final contract, based on an analysis showing a straight minimum of $139.60 per week for beginners and $278 for those in the top grade.

Shift changes, he said, were increased to 13½ for the first, and 18½ for the second. Premium pay for Sunday work was raised to 65% an hour.

The new pact calls for the day after Thanksgiving as an additional paid holiday. Vacations were liberalized to provide for four weeks after 16 years (was 17), and five after 23 years (was 24).

The major medical plan was increased from $500 to $750, an unlimited, and a provision added to cover x-ray and laboratory expenses up to $100 for each calendar year.

The OPEIU bargaining team was headed by Rowland Hughes as chairman, and included as negotiators Malcolm Farmer, John State and Roland Hege Alternates were Neil Hayden and Don McCord.

EDP Employees Discover OPEIU Pays Off

Wage boosts averaging 21% in one year, a 35-hour workweek with five holidays, and an improved vacation schedule were won in an initial contract negotiated by Local 15 for its new 40-member bargaining unit at Central Data Systems (B.C. Central Credit Union), in Vancouver, B.C., President-Business Manager Bill Swanson reports.

He lists pre-union wage rates for the electronic data personnel with the minimum-maximum monthly scales under the initial agreement as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-</th>
<th>March</th>
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<td>union</td>
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<td>Key punch Operator</td>
<td>$600</td>
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<td>Computor Operator</td>
<td>$780</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programmers</td>
<td>$1,137</td>
<td>$1,262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Analysts</td>
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He says the new contract schedule calls for three weeks after one year, four after five, and six after 15.

Madison School Unit Hits Jackpot

Wins Shorter Week, Other Big Gains in Second Contract

A reduced workweek to 38½ from 40, across-board wage boosts of 6½% in each year plus a new longevity pay plan, were among the gains made by Madison, Wisc., Local 39 for its bargaining unit of secretaries and clericals at Middleton School District, Midwest Organizing Council Representatives Vern Paul reports.

He says the new longevity clause will result in a wage increase of 13% for many employees in the first year, and as much as 30% in the second year over the previous contract.

The probability period was reduced to three months. Management agreed to a dues check-off, contractual recognition of stewards with super seniority for the chief steward, and recognition of a grievance committee.

The school board also agreed to pay an additional $25 per month into the retirement fund for each employee, and to bear full cost of all medical tests. Previously, employees had to pay for some of these mandatory tests.

SIGN NEW CONTRACT: Smiling faces reflect happiness with second contract renegotiated by Local 39 with four major bargaining units in each district in Madison, Wisc. From left are School Board Spokesman Don Dean, Betty Redmond and Rita Goucher, unit negotiating committee members. In rear (from left) are John Woeste, School Board; Bonnie Hanson and Louise Frank, unit committee members, and Vern Paul, Midwest Council Representative. Another committee alternate, Pam Van Sylke, was absent when picture was taken.
OPEIU Scores for Municipal Unit Ups Pay 18% With Big Benefits in Initial Pact

An 18% across-the-board wage boost, a new health-welfare plan paid for by the employer for employees and their dependents, and an agreement to implement a pension plan, highlight an initial two-year contract negotiated by Portland's Local 11 for its new unit of municipal employees in the City of Woodland, Washington.

The agreement calls for a 9 1/2% wage boost retroactive to March 1 last, with another 5 1/2% increase to take effect January 1 when the rate in the lowest grade will rise to $576 per month (was $485 before the contract). It sets a rate of $1,039 per month in the top classification, compared with an $875 pre-union rate.

The pact further provides eight paid holidays; 12 days vacation after one year; 13 after three; 14 after four, and 15 days after five years. After 10 years of service, employees will be entitled to 16 days, with one additional day for each two years of service up to 18 when employees will become eligible for four weeks vacation.

Employees will be entitled to sick leave of one day per month cumulative to 60 days. The employer agreed to provide group medical coverage for employees, paying the full costs, and to contribute $10 per month for employees to enroll his or her dependents.

Next March 1, the dependent contribution will be increased to $18 with a $48 maximum for coverage of employees and dependents.

The initial agreement also provides for a union shop with double dues checkoff.

The OPEIU negotiating team consisted of Sec.-Treas. Walter Englebert, Steward Gary Tivey and International Representative Gary D. Kirkland.

City Hall Employees Gain in Muskegon Heights Pact

A 15% across-the-board wage boost in the first year, with step increases each six months up to six years, an additional holiday and other gains, were among the gains made in a new two-year contract renegotiated by Tacoma Local 21 for its members' office unit at Kitsap Physicians Service in Bremerton, Wash.

Business Representative Frank F. Fennerty, Jr., reports that effective July 1, 1976, employees will also get the actual percentage increase as a cost-of-living allowance based on the Consumer Price Index.

The new pact sets a starting scale of $561 per month in the lowest grade, rising to a $587 maximum, and a $649 rate in the top grade rising to an $808 maximum.

Columbus Day now becomes a paid holiday. Sick leave may be accrued to 50 days with 50% paid upon termination or retirement. The health-welfare plan was improved to provide family dental coverage effective July 1, 1976. Travel pay was increased to 15 1/2¢ per mile.

The negotiating committee comprises Sec.-Treas. and President Robert F. Meystrik, Executive Board member, John Shelton, President of the Kitsap-Redmond-Harry Portage, Burma-Boat, and Lynn Twitty, members of its Advisory Board. Since all funds to pay Division Employees' salaries come from the federal government rather than the state, the suit also names as defendants U.S. Secretary of Labor W. David Durenberger, U.S. Treasury Sec. William E. Simon, and William E. Simon, and William E. Simon, and William E. Simon, and William E. Simon, and William E. Simon.

Plaintiffs are Local 511 of the U.S. Postal Service, Bremerton, Kan., and the Kitsap-Redmond-Puget Sound-Puyallup (HK), in a Danish newspaper, made a strong appeal to women to play their part in trade unions.

Harvie listed two major problems: one is that too many women workers stay outside the labor movement; the other, that women in the unions do not believe in their own strength.

"It is evident," he said, "that we are faced with very conservative attitudes. Within the family, very often only the husband is unionized and there is a feeling that his union membership covers the needs of the whole family. The working woman, however, should not be dragged into the union; she should feel the need for unionization for herself."

"Among the young members of HK one can see the importance which influence-conscious and self-assured women can have within the trade union movement."

City Hall Employees Gain in Muskegon Heights Pact

New Missouri Local 511 Files Suit for Equal Pay

Local 511, whose members comprise employees of the Missouri Division of Employment Security (Unemployment Office), has filed suit against state and federal officials to increase the salaries of the division's employees.

Filed in Cole County Circuit Court, the suit seeks to enforce the provision of a state law which calls for salaries paid to Missouri Employment Security employees to be "comparable" to those paid such employees in other states whose size and volume of operations are similar.

If you move, send your old and new address, including zip code to: William A. Lowe, Sec-Treas.
110 South Street, N.W., Suite 406
Washington, D.C. 20006

Insurance Firm's Agreement Wipes Out Wage Inequities

Wage inequity adjustments ranging as high as $61 per month in addition to a 5%

across-the-board increase were gained by Local 19 for its insurance bargaining unit in one-year contract renegotiated with the Title Guarantee & Trust Company, in Toledo, Ohio. International Representative John W. Richardson, District 11 of the AFL-CIO

The new pact establishes a union shop, requiring new employees to become members after successfully completing the probationary period. It calls for a wage increase of at least 5% for employees promoted to a higher classification, and for a 10% wage boost when an employee is requested to perform in a higher grade for two consecutive days or for five days in a month.

It also stipulates that an employee involuntarily assigned to an equal or lower rated classification shall continue to receive his or her regular rate.

Gives Reasons Why Women Shy Away from Unionism

Max Harvo, president of Denmark's Office Workers' Union (HK), in an interview with a Danish newspaper, made a strong appeal to women to play their part in trade unions.

HK has 120,000 women members, of whom 35,000 are part-timers and some 70% are under 30 years of age.

Harvo listed two major problems: one is that too many women workers stay outside the labor movement; the other, that women in the unions do not believe in their own strength.

"It is evident," he said, "that we are faced with very conservative attitudes. Within the family, very often only the husband is unionized and there is a feeling that his union membership covers the needs of the whole family. The working woman, however, should not be dragged into the union; she should feel the need for unionization for herself."

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