



WHITE COLLAR

Office and Professional Employees International Union, AFL-CIO and CLC

No. 449

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Delegates Train Regionally

See story on page 5



Seattle Housing Authority Workers Choose Local 8

A year-long organizing campaign resulted in victory for the Seattle Housing Authority workers, who voted 48-to-9 in favor of OPEIU representation, back in June 1993. We regret not being able until now to congratulate these sixty-five new mem-

bers —workers eligible to vote in the election of one of the largest public housing agencies in the country. These new members sought fairness on the job.

The perseverance of a large, repre-
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The new members of OPEIU Local 8 at the Seattle Housing Authority celebrate their organizing victory.

48-Hour Strike at Savin Canada Brings Job Security

The following article appeared in the October/November 1993 issue of OTEU News, the newspaper of OTEU Local 378 in British Columbia, Canada. We reprint it here for its newsworthiness and the benefit of our other local unions.

A 48-hour strike at Savin Copytron in Langley and Richmond has resulted in a two-year contract for our newest group of OTEU members. This is a first agreement for 50 technicians and office workers who service fax and copy machines.

The new agreement provides job security and standard hours of work for OTEU members at Savin Copytron. "Job security and protection from contracting out were the most impor-

tant issues and we achieved those goals in the new contract," said OTEU Senior Business Rep Scott Watson who led the negotiating committee.

Other OTEU Negotiating Committee members included Savin Copytron workers Barbara Brown, Norm Pope and George Ahl, as well as OTEU Union Organizer Kathleen Madden.

Round-the-clock picket lines went up September 1st at Savin following a breakdown in contract talks. The new agreement was ratified September 3, 1993, after an all-night bargaining session.

"Because this was a first contract, it is difficult to compute company-wide wage increases," explained Watson.

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Wisconsin Awards Family Leave to Local 35 Member

All Nelson Guzman wanted was to spend time with his newborn child, Jordan Nelson. Guzman is a member of OPEIU Local 35 and works for Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The baby was born February 17, 1993.

Six weeks of unpaid leave is guaranteed to workers by the Wisconsin Fam-

ily and Medical Leave Act. Guzman, however, couldn't afford to be off work without pay for that period of time. Few working people can.

He, therefore, applied to substitute paid sick leave time for the family time. Paid sick leave is provided by the Local 35 contract and the substitution is allowed under the family leave law.

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Questions & Answers for Union Members

How President Clinton's Health Reform Plan Affects Your Benefits

I have excellent health benefits through my employer now. Will the new plan be as good?

For the vast majority of Americans, the Clinton comprehensive benefits package will cover at least as much as the current one. It's modeled on the packages offered by Fortune 500 companies. And most importantly because these benefits will be guaranteed by law, your employer and insurer can't cut your benefits in the future.

My employer pays the full premium for me and my family. Would I pay more under the Clinton plan?

Again, most employees would see little difference. Under the Clinton plan, employers would be allowed to pay more than 80 percent of the premium, so that employers that cover everything now can still do so. Benefits experts say that if you work for a large company, you probably would get to keep the benefits you have. Unions provide an added measure of protection since employers must negotiate any reductions with the union.

Won't I be paying more for less?

To the contrary, most insured Americans will see their out-of-pocket costs go down and/or improvements in their benefits. Two-thirds of those currently insured are expected to pay less for similar health benefits. Another 20 percent will pay some more, but will get better health benefits in return. Those asked to pay more will get the security of health coverage that's always there.

Will my health benefits be taxed?

No. The guaranteed benefits package will not be taxed and neither will be additional employer contributions to cover worker premiums and other cost-sharing. Existing benefits that exceed what is in the standard package negotiated by January 1, 1993, will not be taxable for ten years.

My spouse and I both work. Will we have to pay twice for family coverage?

No. Under the current plan, families choose the health plan they want to join and pay only the worker's share once. However, both employers will be required to make adjusted premium payments on behalf of each of you. President Clinton wants to make certain that all employers are contributing to the system.

What happens to part-time workers?

Today, most part-timers don't get coverage through their employers. Most part-time workers are uninsured. Those who are insured buy individual policies or get covered by their

spouses. Under reform, all employers would be required to contribute towards those working part-time (i.e., less than 30 hours a week) on a prorated basis. Depending on total family income and eligibility for subsidies, workers pay the remainder. In general, those having individual policies in the past would benefit from cheaper group rates. Two-earner families with one part-time worker would not pay more than the normal family share—a maximum of 20 percent of the cost if they choose an average priced plan.

I get my coverage from a union plan paid for by all employers in my industry. How does the Clinton plan affect me?

Large multi-employer trust funds can stay in business as long as they offer you a choice of plans and cover the guaranteed benefits. Or the union may choose for you to get your coverage through the regional alliance and may provide supplemental benefits.

What happens if I change jobs?

When you change jobs, your health plan goes with you. There will be no break in your coverage, because the new employer starts paying your premium from your first day on the job. And every health plan must take all comers, regardless of medical conditions.

Suppose I lose my job. Will I become uninsured?

No American will ever be uninsured again, even when they are unemployed. In a two-earner household the other employer will still be paying for family coverage. If you are the only earner in your household, you'll keep your current coverage. How much you pay depends on your income. Most unemployed Americans would pay little to keep full coverage.

I like my doctor. Won't the Clinton plan restrict my choice of doctors?

No. Everyone will be able to enroll in a fee-for-service plan that lets you choose any doctor. And, most importantly, Americans increasingly find their choices restricted as employers struggle with skyrocketing health costs. Many businesses offer only one health plan option to their employees. Under the Clinton plan, most Americans will have more choice.

My mother is on Medicare. What does the Clinton plan mean for her?

She would continue to get Medicare and, therefore, she keeps her doctors. The Clinton plan also includes a new prescription drug benefit and long-term care program.

At contract time, the employer always says there's no money for wage increases because of health costs. Will the Clinton plan change that?

Yes. President Clinton has proposed a National Health Budget. This budget system will be used to limit



Mouths are agape in Local 15, as were the jaws of Roxenne and Mary Basaraba that dropped open after winning a 6/49 Jackpot prize of \$2,259,062.50.

"We just stood there and shook, and stared at each other," says Roxenne, a longtime member the Vancouver, British Columbia local union.

Basaraba and her 70-year-old mother Mary have been playing 6/49 together for a period of four years.

"We each chip in so much per week," explains Basaraba. "We like the convenience of Advance Buy tickets. We tried picking our own numbers and weren't getting anywhere, so we started buying Quick Picks."

The Quick Pick, which matched winning numbers 16, 24, 25, 27, 29, and 40 for the prize, was purchased at the Cottonwood Mall in Sardis, Basaraba said. "I was at Save-On so I bought our tickets there. I've only bought tickets there six times—my timing sure was good."

The Basarabas realized they'd won after Mary watched the draw on TV.

"She saw the balls come out, then went outside to tell Dad," Basaraba recalls. "She could hardly talk. She just stood there shaking, saying: 'Six . . . we got all six!' Dad was pretty stunned."

Her father phoned Basaraba with the news.

"He said: 'Your mother matched six numbers.' I said: 'You're kidding me,' and Mom got on the phone and said: 'It's true!'" Basaraba rushed home right away.

"We phoned friends and told them we won," she says. "No one slept much that night."

And what are her plans, now that she's a millionaire? Basaraba has booked a Caribbean Cruise in February. She has invited, at her expense, several union sisters: Local Vice President Louise Gibson and members Nancy Grant and Barbara English, plus a colleague Charmaine Murray.

All of OPEIU and Local 15 most particularly congratulate Sister Basaraba on her good luck and wish her well.

premium increases. After a few years, premiums won't be allowed to increase faster than inflation. The Clinton plan also outlaws the insurance company practice of raising your premium if you get sick, cracks down on fraud and abuse and eliminates excessive paperwork. Controlled health costs will free up money for wage increases and other benefit improvements.

Won't a government budget mean health care rationing—long lines to see doctors and get care?

That's just another scare tactic from the people who profit from the status quo. It's a smokescreen so they can hide from what we all know: if we don't get costs under control, we'll have health care that only the healthiest can get and the wealthiest can afford.

What will be the impact of the Clinton plan on health workers?

Front-line health care workers are among the strongest advocates for health care reform—as they witness

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GILLES BEAUREGARD Secretary-Treasurer

GWEN WELLS Managing Editor
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Washington Window

The Rise of the Part-Time Workforce

Since the early 1970s, an increasingly larger percentage of the nation's labor force has been composed of part-time workers.

In many cases working part-time is a matter of choice; mothers with young children or retirees, for example, wanting to supplement family incomes.

Yet more and more, especially since the 1980s, Americans have been taking part-time jobs not because they wanted to, but because they weren't able to find full-time work.

This trend presents problems for both the involuntary part-timer and the U.S. economy, according to an Economic Policy Institute book of four essays titled "New Policies for the Part-Time and Contingent Workforce." It includes these findings:

- Between 1979 and 1989, employment in the U.S. rose by about 16 million people. However, one-fourth of this growth was in part-time work. Further, involuntary part-time employment accounted for about 40 percent of the new part-time jobs.
- The trend toward involuntary part-time employment has accelerated since the recession officially ended in March 1991. This suggests that employers have succeeded in expanding part-time jobs even though employee preferences are shifting toward full-time jobs.
- Currently, nearly 22 million workers—about a fifth of all workers—hold part-time jobs. The average hourly wage of part-time workers is only 60 percent of that of full-time workers. Part-time workers are much less likely to have health care, pension, vacation and other fringe benefits.
- Part-timers are much less likely to have the opportunity for trade union representation. In 1987, only 8 percent of part-time workers were union members compared to 21.7 percent for full-time workers.
- Black workers, women and teens—all disadvantaged groups in the labor force—are especially likely to be locked into involuntary part-time jobs.

In recent years, however, men aged 20 to 64 have increased their share of part-time employment while women in the age 22-44 primary childbearing years have slightly decreased their rate of part-time work. Thus, demographic shifts or changing work preferences cannot be used to explain the rise in part-time work.

Instead, the explanation rests more in economic forces as well as private and public policies, the book's authors conclude.

The expanding trade and services

industries are largely dominated by low-wage part-time jobs. Many employers, faced with increased competition and a shaky economy, hire part-timers in an attempt to cut costs and gain flexibility.

However, the book finds that the growth of a class of low-wage part-time jobs that offer inferior benefits and little opportunity for advancement has had a negative effect on labor productivity from a workforce marked by high turnover, low skills and minimal job commitment.

For example, the rapid growth of part-time employment in the retail sector has been accompanied by steadily declining labor productivity; between 1967 and 1985, retail productivity fell by an average of 0.1 percent per year.

"The continued growth of part-time and temporary employment threatens to reduce the economic security of all workers, and to weaken workforce productivity and efficiency," writes Virginia L. duRivage, the book's editor and author of one of its four sections.

What, then, can be done?

To move part-time and contingent workers "into the mainstream of job opportunity and federal protection," duRivage proposes that Congress pass legislation to:

- guarantee hourly parity between part-time and full-time workers performing the same job;
- restore the minimum wage to its original standard of 50 percent of the median hourly wage;
- standardize eligibility requirements under state unemployment compensation systems;
- adopt pension portability measures which allow workers to carry pension credits with them to their next job;
- enact universal health care insurance;
- reform labor law to expand opportunities for union representation of workers in non-traditional employment.

Q & A

(Continued from page 2)

the waste, inefficiency and lack of access first-hand. Nevertheless, overhauling the health care system will necessarily result in a shift in jobs in the health care industry. When the new system is up and running, more people will be directly giving care and fewer people will be filling out forms. With millions of new people getting health coverage and an increased emphasis on preventive care, there will be more demand for primary care doctors, nurses and other health care providers.

Work and Health How'd You Sleep Last Night?

by Phillip L. Polakoff, M.D.
Director, Western Institute for
Occupational/Environmental Sciences

How'd you sleep last night? Did you have trouble falling asleep? Did you wake up several times during the night? Was it hard to get back to sleep? If it's any comfort, you aren't alone. According to the National Sleep Foundation, one out of three American adults has had trouble falling asleep or staying asleep in the past year.

Here's an insomnia quiz prepared by the sleep foundation. It may help you to put your particular problem in perspective. Circle those statements that describe any symptoms you may have had in the past year. Count the number of statements you have circled, then look at the explanation that follows:

1. Falling asleep is hard for me.
2. I have too much on my mind to go to sleep.
3. When I wake up in the night, I can't go back to sleep.
4. I can't relax because I have too many worries.
5. Even when I sleep all night, I'm still tired in the morning.
6. Sometimes I am afraid to close my eyes and go to sleep.
7. I wake up too early.
8. It takes me more than an hour or so to fall asleep.
9. I am stiff and sore in the morning.
10. I feel depressed when I can't sleep.

Even if you have circled only one statement, you may want to consult your doctor if you are concerned about this problem. If you have circled:

1 to 3 statements—you may not have a problem. Be assured that it is not unusual to have trouble sleeping at some point in your life.

4 to 6 statements—you may have a problem. Some suggestions follow. If they don't improve your sleep habits, talk with your doctor.

7 to 10 statements—chances are you have a sleep problem that requires medical attention.

Here are those tips for the middle group:

Keep a sleep log for a week or two. Write down when you go to bed, get up, drink caffeine-containing beverages or alcohol, and when and how much exercise you did.

A log can help identify trouble spots in your routine, and many times simple changes can help.

Here are some specifics:

- Avoid caffeine within six hours of bedtime. Avoid alcohol and smoking one to two hours before bedtime.
- Exercise regularly, but limit vigorous exercise to late afternoon. Strenuous exercise too close to bedtime may actually impair your ability to sleep.
- Establish relaxing presleep rituals, such as a warm bath or a few minutes of reading.
- Go to bed only when you are sleepy, and use your bed for sleeping only, not as an office or a place to watch television.
- Get up at about the same time every day, regardless of when you fall asleep.
- If you are a bedtime "worrier," set aside another time - perhaps 30 minutes after dinner—and write down your problems and possible solutions. Then put them out of your mind.

• If you can't sleep, don't stay in bed fretting. After 10 or 15 minutes, go to another room and read or watch television until you feel sleepy.

Sleep needs are different for different people. Some individuals can sleep four or five hours and wake up refreshed; others can sleep for eight hours and still wake up feeling sleepy.

Regardless of your age, the best measurement of how much sleep you need is how you feel throughout the day. After a good night's sleep, there should be no daytime drowsiness. If there is, you aren't getting enough quality sleep.

The Clinton plan includes specific worker development policies. It includes funds for retraining, career ladder programs and other skills upgrading measures to facilitate worker mobility and job relocation (e.g., health care job banks). Worker and union involvement in major structural changes in the delivery system are included.

Won't this plan hurt small businesses and cost jobs?

Most small businesses (almost two-thirds) already pay for coverage. They'll save money when premiums are controlled and administrative

costs are lowered. Those businesses that don't provide coverage now will be gradually phased in and will be provided subsidies to help them pay for coverage for their employees. No business will be at a competitive disadvantage. All will be required to contribute.

One interesting example is Hawaii, which passed a law in 1974 requiring all businesses to contribute to the cost of their employees' health insurance. In 1991 Hawaii was the nation's third fastest-growing state for small businesses. Hawaii's unemployment rates are consistently among the lowest in the nation.

BRIGHT STARS

1993 OPEIU Scholarship Winners (U.S.)



Maria Black

Fourteen bright shining stars—all children of OPEIU members—are the recipients of the 1993 Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship. They won over hundreds of other entrants—the best and brightest of their graduating high school classes.

“OPEIU is pleased to offer the opportunity to pursue higher education to our members and their children. We are always proud of our scholarship winners and hope they will have successful academic careers, that they will make important contributions to society. We’re glad we may be able to assist them in this pursuit,” said John Kelly, OPEIU International President.

The scholarships represent a maximum of a \$4,000 financial contribution over four years to each winning student’s college education. Based on merit, the 14 awards in the U.S. are made annually to students within each of the six regions of the country.

Six awards are also presented to OPEIU Canadian members or their children.

The scholarships award committee this year was Professor John R. Macenzie, Professor Grace Palladino and Dr. Isadore Goldberg, assisted by OPEIU staff member Ulrike Cordes.

The Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship winners for 1993 are:

Michael Beckstead has chosen Ohio Northern University for his undergraduate education. (Photo was unavailable.) Beckstead is the son of a member of Local 1794 in Cleveland, Ohio.

Maria Black attends Oberlin College in Ohio. Oberlin’s clerical staff just happen to be members of OPEIU Local 502, as is Black’s parent.

Jacob Brann, son of a OPEIU Local 320 member from Kansas City, Missouri-Kansas, selected the University of Missouri-Rolla to pursue his academic career.

Arne Carlson attends Loyola University in Chicago, Illinois. She’s the daughter of a member of Local 444 member from Galesburg, Illinois.

Brianne Siddal Chierighino chose California State University, Northridge, for her studies. Her parent is a member of Local 174 from Los Angeles, California.

Solon Frazilus, son of OPEIU Local 210 member from New York City, attends Drew University in Madison, New Jersey.

Joanne Kim selected the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. Kim is the daughter of a Local 2 member from Washington, D.C.

Princy Mehta attends classes at Rutgers University College of Engineering in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Mehta’s parent is a member of Local 32 in Union, New Jersey.

Charles Mertes, son of an OPEIU Local 95 member from Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, chose the University of Wisconsin-Madison for his undergraduate studies.

Severen Murphy studies at the University of California San Diego. Murphy’s parent is a member of Local 30 in Los Angeles, California.

Eric Severson, son of a Local 8 member in Seattle, Washington, attends Northwest Nazarene College in Nampa, Idaho.

Jamie Tinker attends the University of Alabama, located in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. His parent is a member of Local 119 in Tennessee.

Terrine Vogt, daughter of an OPEIU Local 11 member (Portland, Oregon), studies at the University of Washington in Seattle.

Valmik Vyas has chosen the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for his academic pursuits. MIT is situated in Cambridge. Vyas is the son of a Local 32 member in New Jersey.

We congratulate all of these stars on their past successes and wish them well in their university studies. Their scholarships are well-deserved.



Solon Frazilus



Arne Carlson



Joanne Kim



Eric Severson



Severen Murphy



Jamie Tinker



Terrine Vogt



Charles Mertes



Princy Mehta



Valmik Vyas



Brianne Siddal Chierighino



Jacob Brann

Regional Conferences Tackle Issues: Sexual Harassment, Organizing, Health Care, National Labor Struggles

Sexual harassment and organizing training continued to draw enthusiastic participants from the local unions to the OPEIU 1993 regional conferences. International President John Kelly emphasized the need to increase membership to protect present members and existing bargaining units, as well as the very lives of the local unions. He also pointed out that without greater strength the union has less clout, not only at the bargaining table but in the Halls of Congress and within state houses. Finally he noted that the primary mission of the union is to organize unorganized workers and bring them the benefits of collective bargaining.

Education Director Gwen Wells observed that although the concept of sexual harassment has been around for over 30 years, it attracted much more interest after the Clarence Thomas-Anita Hill hearings. Those hearings, she said, emphasized how little people understood about the concept, how widespread it has become and yet very little importance has been given to it. These conferences seek to explain to our local unions exactly what sexual harassment is and is not, what our members should know to prevent it, and how unions can best defend our members subjected to such harassment.



President John Kelly accepts generous donations from Local 6, 453 and 600 to the union's Voice of the Electorate (political action) fund.

Northeast

Northeast conference delegates met in Boston, Massachusetts, October 15 to 17, 1993. Locals 2 (Washington, D.C.); 6 (Boston, MA); 32 (Union, NJ); 106 (Groton, CT); 153 (New York, NY); 232 (Madawaska, ME); 345 (Berlin, NH); 402 (San Juan, PR); 453 (Boston, MA); and 600 (Boston, MA) all sent representatives.

University of Massachusetts Dartmouth professors Jose Soler and Bronwen Zwirner led discussions in the advanced and beginning organizing seminars respectively. At a special luncheon discussion Peter Knowlton, an organizer with UE, described the union's "blitz campaign", which had increased the local's membership by 30 percent.

Delegates were energized to begin new campaigns and shared readily with each other their experiences of what works and what doesn't.

Maureen Woods helped participants to understand the law regarding sexual harassment, what it is and what it is not, how the union can resolve disputes in the grievance-arbitration procedures, what members should know to prevent sexual harassment.

International President John Kelly; Vice Presidents Michael Goodwin, James Mahoney and Patrick Tully; Education Director Gwen Wells and Representatives Chuck McDermott and James Noone attended for the International Union.

North Central

Minnesota AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Bill Peterson emphasized the importance of health care reform to the delegates to this conference, meeting

Workers also appealed to the delegates for assistance in the grape boycott, which is having a substantial economic impact on the growers, he said. Delegates purchased t-shirts, pins, and other union paraphernalia from both the UMWA and UFWA representatives. President John Kelly pledged the support of the OPEIU to both groups.

Organizing discussions were led by Ken Gagala, while Dawn Addy taught the sexual harassment segment. Both are faculty members from the University of Minnesota.

Locals 1 (Indianapolis, IN); 12 (Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN); 28 (Chicago, IL); 35 (Milwaukee, WI); 39 (Madison, WI); 85 (Milwaukee, WI); 95 (Wisconsin Rapids, WI); 391 (Chicago, IL); 444 (Galesburg, IL); and 787 (West Allis,



Marcy Kaptur, U.S. House of Representatives (D-OH), appears here with Local 19 President Don Mohamed and International President John Kelly following her keynote address to the Erie Regional Conference in Toledo, Ohio.

WI). Besides President John Kelly and Education Director Gwen Wells, the International Union was represented by Vice Presidents Carolyn Combs and Michael Walker, and Representatives Ann Peckham and Bonnie Strauss.

Erie

Marcy Kaptur, U.S Representative (D-OH), spoke energetically in opposition to NAFTA and in support of health care reform, as the Erie Conference's keynote luncheon speaker. Although Kaptur argued vehemently against the North American Free Trade Agreement and pointed out how it would

hurt American workers and the economy, as we all know: it was ultimately passed by the House and Senate. It now remains to be seen if our dire predictions were true, and how badly we will be hurt.

Again representatives from the United Farm Workers of America (Mario Brito) and the United Mineworkers of America (Ed Yankovich and Jim Pocratsky) updated members of the respective struggles, sold items and solicited donations and assistance.

Both the organizing (one-on-one and concerted activities) and sexual harassment segments were taught by Cathy Lundy and John Beck from Michigan State University's Labor Edu-

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North Central: Speech on the need for health care reform.



Northeast Conference: Beginning Organizing Class.



At Boston's Northeast Conference, participants contemplate the concept of sexual harassment.



Erie Conference: One-on-One and Concerted Activities Class.

in Minneapolis from November 22 to 24, 1993. Peterson outlined the Clinton proposals, fielded questions from participants on how the plan would affect them and their members, and encouraged them to rally the members to support the reforms (see page 2 for some of those questions and answers).

OPEIU consistently supports the struggles of brothers and sisters from other trade unions. In an effort to do so again, two Southern Illinois mineworkers—Gary Cleland and Bill Winkelman—described the strike of the United Mineworkers of America against several coal companies and sought support financially and otherwise for their fight.

Mario Brito from the United Farm

CLUW Reelects Wells as VP



OPEIU delegates attend CLUW Convention.

Education and Research Director Gwen Wells was reelected to a second two-year term as a National Vice President of the Coalition of Labor Union Women. The vote by acclamation took place at CLUW's biennial convention, held in Las Vegas, Nevada, November 4 to 7, 1993.

Sara Chaney (Local 106, Groton, CT), Mary Quinn (Local 3, San Francisco) and Emagene Walker (Local 153, New York City) were elected by OPEIU convention delegates to serve as union representatives to the CLUW National Executive Board. The NEB, which governs between

conventions, meets three times annually. Janet Graham (Local 8, Seattle), Gwen Newton (Local 30, Los Angeles) and Juanita Ray (Local 32, Newark, NJ) were elected as alternates.

The CLUW delegates took up resolutions dealing with such far-ranging and diverse issues as NAFTA, pay equity, child care, reproductive rights, sexual harassment, immigration, health care reform and much more.



The nearly 1,200 participants held a rally in support of the Frontier Hotel strikers, who have been on the picket lines for two years.

Janet Graham from OPEIU Local 8 in Seattle, Washington, carries the union banner in CLUW's opening flag ceremony.

SHORT TAKES

The 35 office employees at C.W. Sweeney in Denver, Colorado have chosen OPEIU Local 3 as their bargaining representative. International Representative Jeff Rusich reports that an NLRB election was unnecessary. Local 3 represents Sweeney employees in San Francisco as well and hopes to simply extend that collective bargaining agreement to the new members.

Local 57 is engaged in a struggle with the **Mouvement Desjardins** which is the second largest employer in Quebec with some 37,000 employees. Mouvement Desjardins wants to force the 3,500 Local 57 members to work ever-changing, overly flexible work schedules without compensation. To this date, 23 groups have started rotating strikes in an effort to counter Mouvement Desjardins union-busting strategies.



Steve Hancock

United Way of Southeastern Connecticut voted to have OPEIU Local 106 represent them in bargaining. Local President **Steve Hancock** reports that "the perseverance of the employees as well as the support of the labor community helped to reinforce the spirit in which labor and the United Way was built over the years.

Hancock also made a presentation on the benefits of membership in the Coalition of Labor Union at the recent OPEIU Northeast Regional Conference in Boston. He informs the delegates here of the need to fight for women's, family, trade union and human rights through CLUW.

Sally B. Rodgers, member of OPEIU Local 18, was elected Executive Vice President of the **Alabama AFL-CIO**. Rodgers is only the second woman to hold elected office in the Alabama AFL-CIO. Rodgers has been an employee of the federation for more than 15 years. She worked previously for the Visiting Nurses Association. She is also an elected member of the Alabama Democratic Executive Committee.

On Wednesday, November 17, 1993, Education and Research Director **Gwen Wells** was also elected to the Board of Directors of the **National Committee on Pay Equity**. The position is extremely competi-

Homeless Shelter Employees Win First OPEIU Contract

After nearly one year of negotiations, OPEIU Local 3 members at St. Vincent de Paul Society of San Francisco have achieved their first collective bargaining agreement, reports International Representative Jeff Rusich. The agreement was ratified by a unanimous vote of 75 percent of the bargaining unit employees on September 2, 1993.

Negotiations took so long, Rusich said, because the employer used stall tactics, cancelling pre-arranged meetings, only superficially bargaining when they did meet . . .

Local 3, therefore, built an even stronger solidarity among the members, keeping them continually informed every step of the way. They held regular meetings with the bargaining committee—a committee consisting of the same in-house committee that organized the shelter in the first place—and distributed informational leaflets to members on the negotiations' progress.

"We also had the employees wear buttons," Rusich said, "and on one occasion, all of the bargaining committee wore black to a bargaining session. Further, the seed was planted that, if necessary, we would use the media or the National Labor Relations Board to expose management's unfair actions."

The employer finally realized that

the members and their union meant business and were in this for the duration. In their very good first contract, these Local 8 members won:

- a strong health and safety committee with real teeth to establish protections—so important to homeless shelters
- a 3.5% across-the-board wage increase
- an employer paid drug prescription plan—a top priority for members during the organizing drive
- a percentage differential for second-shift workers
- protective language regarding seniority, layoffs and grievances

The agreement runs for three years with reopeners in the second and third years for negotiating wages and benefits.

Bargaining committee members were: Mike Begley (Ozanam DeTox Center), Blesilda Ocampo (Riley Center Battered Women's Shelter), Keith Bussey (Richmond Hills Family Shelter), Van Sias and Ron Steele (Multi-Service Center Homeless Shelter), Lita Goring (the low-income Arlington Hotel), and Bob Fazackerly (Administration Office). They were assisted in the negotiations by Nancy Wolforth, Local 3 Senior Business Representative, Local 3 Secretary-Treasurer George Davis, and Jeff Rusich.

Conference

(Continued from page 5)

cation Program.

Locals 10 (Detroit, MI); 17 (Cleveland, OH); 19 (Toledo, OH); 42 (Detroit, MI); 67 (Charleston, WV); 339 (Akron, OH); 393 (Flint, MI); 422 (Chillicothe, OH); 457 (Centerville, PA); 459 (Lansing, MI); 494 (Detroit, MI); 502

(Oberlin, OH); and 513 (Elyria, OH) sent members and representatives for training. The International Union was represented by President John Kelly, Education Director Gwen Wells, Representatives Pat Jeney, Jay Porcaro and Bob Simmons.

The Erie Conference took place in Toledo, Ohio, November 12 to 14, 1993.

tive among unions. The organization NCPE is very important to the membership of OPEIU, as well as many other labor unions.

Local 343 in Saskatchewan recently won a first contract for some 250 people at Ticketmaster. The agreement is currently pending ratification.



Kathryn Lee

Kathryn Lee, president of Local 339 in Akron, Ohio, described OPEIU, its membership, history, goals, policies, and more to the other peer counselors in a counselling program conducted by the Akron-Medina Labor Council and Department of Labor. The nine-week training program, on behalf of United Way, attracted 37 union volunteers.

Oakland General Hospital clerical, service and maintenance workers in Madison Heights, Michigan, voted July 19, 1993, to change their affiliation from Local 10 to OPEIU Local 459 in Lansing, Michigan.

The 230 workers include dietary and housekeeping workers, transcriptionists and medical records coders, ward secretaries, nursing assistants, transporters and emergency room technicians. Local 459 currently is developing a steward structure in the hospital, as well as steward training classes.

Wisconsin Awards Family Leave

(Continued from page 1)

Northwestern Mutual, however, refused the request, forcing Guzman to take only one week of vacation time to be home with his newborn.



Nelson Guzman appears here with his family — wife Becky and children Jordan Nelson and Diana.

Never mind that Guzman is a sixteen-year employee with a perfect attendance record for the last nine years and a near perfect record for the previous years.

Never mind that the OPEIU contract provides a wage continuation-disability income plan. Whoa!

Contractually, under the disability income plan, the Wisconsin Equal Rights Division found that Guzman was eligible for 67.2 days for substitution purposes at 100% of salary. The State, therefore, awarded him five weeks of paid family leave. It further ordered Northwestern Mutual to restore the one week of vacation time taken by the employee. Guzman was also awarded attorneys fees, to be paid by the employer.

OPEIU Local 35 Business Representative Judy Burnick said, "We expect Northwestern to appeal the case, but our attorneys tell us that we should easily win the case for our member Nelson Guzman. We will fight to win."

Guzman and his wife Becky have another child as well, Diana, age 10.

Union Privilege Legal Service: A Program That Works—For Free

Have you ever found yourself in need of legal help? Are you aware that your union OPEIU offers legal advice and assistance—and often times for free?

Through the Union Privilege Legal Service, you can get your legal questions answered, have personal documents reviewed, and obtain other forms of legal assistance—all for little or no charge in most cases.

This OPEIU benefit entitles you to a free 30-minute legal consultation—either in person or over the phone—on any matter you choose that is not union-related. If your attorney thinks a letter or a phone call can resolve your problem, then it will be done—without a charge. If you need more in-depth legal assistance, you're eligible for a 30-percent discount on all services provided.

The Legal Service also offers a free review of your personal documents, such as leases, insurance policies or sales contracts. And this represents real savings to you and your family, especially compared to similar legal problems, which can cost up to \$100 per year—just to belong.

A few comments from union members you have used the Union Privilege Legal Service:

I feel this service is very valuable. It is comforting to know that if I have a legal problem, I can, with a couple of phone calls, speak with an attorney who has been screened and who I know is not going to cost me a lot of money.

The law firm I worked with is, in my opinion, one of the best

in Philadelphia. My attorney, her associate and her secretary are great examples of the type of people who are employed at this firm. I appreciate the fact that when you deal with them, you always receive a return call . . .

Of course, the best part of the Legal Service is that it is sponsored by the union, and I would be more likely to trust the lawyers selected to participate. Being recommended by the AFL-CIO also is important because I know that if a member isn't happy about the treatment she gets from a lawyer, the lawyer can be removed from the program.

I called a Union Privilege Legal Service attorney for an initial free consultation. I had a few specific questions about a legal matter, and he answered my questions and gave me helpful advice.

Perhaps the greatest advantage of the Union Privilege Legal Service is simply the security it provides. You and your family may never need a lawyer, but it's reassuring to know that there is a union-endorsed place to turn, just in case you do.

For more information on the Union Privilege Legal Service, or for the names of participating attorneys in your area, contact your local leader or call (800) 452-9425.

The Consumer Price Index for Canada and the U.S.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1992 Canada CPI (1986 = 100)	127.0	127.1	127.5	127.6	127.8	128.1	128.4	128.4	128.3	138.5	129.1	129.1
% Change from Prior Month	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	-0.1	0.2	0.5	0.0
% Change from Year Earlier	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.7	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.6	1.7	2.1
1993 Canada CPI	129.6	130.0	129.9	129.9	130.1	130.2	130.5	130.6	130.7			
% Change from Prior Month	0.4	0.3	-0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1			
% Change from Year Earlier	2.0	2.3	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.9			
1992 U.S. CPI-W *405.2 **136.0	406.2	408.1	408.9	409.9	411.4	412.1	418.3	414.5	415.8	416.5	416.3	
% Change from Prior Month	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.0
% Change from Year Earlier	2.4	2.7	3.0	3.0	2.8	3.0	3.1	3.1	2.9	3.1	2.9	2.9
1993 U.S. CPI-W *417.8 **140.3	419.2	420.4	421.6	422.6	423.1	423.2	424.2	424.9	426.7			
% Change from Prior Month	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.5		
% Change from Year Earlier	3.2	3.2	3.0	3.1	3.1	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.7		

* CPI-W figured on a 1967 base
** CPI-W figured on a 1982-84 base

Seattle

(Continued from page 1)

sentative organizing committee was key to the success of the campaign, according to Local 8 Organizer Cindy Schu. In the face of long delays, a 15 percent worker turnover rate, fear and employees scattered throughout 18 different worksites, the committee maintained excellent communications. They took advantage of the long delays to educate the workers on the union and its benefits and to build worker solidarity.

The committee, Schu says, did an excellent job. Through one-on-one communications, they built support and continually kept the new workers involved. They held fun and accessible events, such as a family bowling night. They weekly distributed a question-and-answer employee write-in. They seized every opportunity to demonstrate how unionization can empower employees.

The committee kept up enthusiasm among the employees in spite of long delays in the election process. The Housing Authority had delayed the election by objecting to the bargaining unit the union sought. That is, the employer disagreed over which employees could vote in the election and ultimately be represented by Local 8. But after months of delays the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) ruled in favor of the union's proposed unit. This win, Schu says, represented a real boost for the workers' confidence and helped propel the momentum needed to win.

Also key to campaign, she says, was the support of other unions associated with the housing authority, including the staff and members of OPEIU Local 23 (Tacoma, WA) and the Seattle/King County Building Trades Council.

The next challenge will be contract negotiations. Schu reports that the workers were continuing to organize as they prepared for bargaining. "With such a clear mandate, they're looking forward to sitting at the table in a strong position," she said.

As an aside, Schu reports that Local 8 also has successfully organized a group of public health dental assistants through a card-check campaign. That is, the union was able to demonstrate to the employer's satisfaction that a majority of employees sought unionization. Congratulations to all of these new Local 8 members!

Strike

(Continued from page 1)

Due to the salary inequities and favoritism that plague individual employees in non-union workplaces, it was difficult to establish base wage rates. The new contract established rates of pay for specific jobs which meant that different employees got different increases, depending on what they were earning before the new agreement.

Employees received salary increases ranging from 2 to 20 percent, retroactive to January 1, 1993. In addition, workers in some job classifications were given further raises. Retroactive pay for all new union members was at least \$1,000. OTEU members also received a \$200 lump sum. In January 1994, workers also will be eligible for a further 3% or Canada Consumer Price Index increase, whichever is greater.

The Savin Copytron workers who joined our union in April 1992 spent more than 16 months at the bargaining table in an effort to get the first contract. The new agreement runs from January 1, 1993, to December 31, 1994.



We Are Thankful to Our Dedicated Activists Who Care Enough to Participate in Training

by John Kelly, International President

The International completed its series of weekend regional education conferences—and quite successfully! We held conferences in Vancouver, Boston, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Toledo and New Orleans.

As you know, we no longer schedule conferences during the week. Instead, we hold them over weekends to reduce the local union's cost of paying lost time (i.e., replacing members' lost wages). By including Saturday evening, we also reduce airfares for our participants who fly.

In addition, each local union receives a cash allowance from the International for conference attendance. These changes have resulted in increased attendance.

However, we still have some local unions who do not participate. They are losing an opportunity to educate members, stewards and staff, to train them to effectively represent other members. With the advent of so many new laws and regulations, it is virtually impossible for them alone to keep up with the changes—changes that can vitally affect our members.

In surveys from last year's conferences, locals requested training on sexual harassment. This is a subject of interest to all members, not just the female membership. (See story page 5.) Due to declining memberships, many also felt it imperative that we

cover organizing campaigns and skills.

Our sexual harassment training included what it is and is not (which is not always so obvious), what can be construed as innocent joking and what conduct is illegal, how members can protect themselves, and how the union can defend the members contractually and legally.

Our organizing training included how to target organizable companies, how to begin a campaign, how to effectively use committees, what employees are most likely to organize and who are the best organizers.

We provided this instruction through the University of Massachusetts in Boston, the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, the University of Alabama in New Orleans, the University of California at Berkeley and UCLA in San Francisco, the University of Michigan at Toledo, and an array of instructors in Vancouver.

Special speakers invariably were called in for additional insights. For example, we were honored to have Bill Peterson, secretary-treasurer of the Minnesota State Federation of the AFL-CIO, addressed those conferees on the vital subject of the need to reform the U.S. health care delivery system.

Dave Sickler, Director of Region 6 of the AFL-CIO, led off the program in California on organizing. He cited sta-

Dedicated Activists

We thank the following Local Unions for participating in the 1993 regional education programs:

2 (Washington, DC); 3 (San Francisco); 6 (Boston); 8 (Seattle); 10 (Detroit); 12 (Minneapolis-St. Paul); 13 (St. Louis); 15 (Vancouver); 17 (Cleveland); 19 (Toledo); 21 (Atlanta); 27 (Galveston); 28 (Chicago); 29 (Oakland); 30 (Los Angeles); 32 (Newark); 35 (Milwaukee);

39 (Madison); 42 (Detroit); 67 (Charleston); 73 (Jacksonville); 85 (Milwaukee); 87 (Lake Charles); 95 (Wisconsin Rapids); 106 (Groton); 119 (Chattanooga); 120 (San Antonio); 153 (New York); 174 (Los Angeles); 204 (Pascagoula); 232 (Madawaska, ME); 277 (Ft. Worth); 298 (Austin);

303 (Texarkana); 306 (Amarillo); 320 (Kansas City); 339 (Akron); 345 (Berlin, NH); 367 (Memphis); 378 (Vancouver); 381 (Oklahoma City); 383 (Baton Rouge); 391 (Chicago); 393 (Flint); 402 (Puerto Rico); 420 (Pine Bluff, AR); 422 (Chillicothe, OH); 437 (Ponca City, OK); 444 (Galesburg, IL);

453 (Boston); 457 (Centerville, PA); 459 (Lansing); 494 (Detroit); 497 (Saskatchewan); 502 (Oberlin, OH); 506 (Puerto Rico); 513 (Elyria, OH); 537 (Los Angeles); 600 (Boston); 787 (Milwaukee)

All of these locals are to be commended for their foresight and leadership. They are inspiration to us all.

tics on the decline of labor union organizing. He cited statistics on the decline of labor union membership and how we had to organize in order not to become irrelevant. He also cited numerous current success stories and explained why they are successful. He was very hopeful and inspiring.

Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) served as luncheon keynote speaker in Toledo where she argued energetically against NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement). She explained to us in much greater detail how NAFTA would hurt workers, not only in Canada and the United States, but in Mexico as well. When NAFTA was first discussed, she said, she led a group of Congresswomen (Democrats and Republicans) to investigate conditions in Mexico. That trip convinced her that NAFTA was bad legislation, that it should not pass in its current form and that it seriously needs modification. She said what we need is not so-called "free trade" but fair trade.

We brought in speakers from other union struggles, since we are part of a larger movement. We firmly believe that a hurt to one worker is a hurt to all. Therefore, we had a representative of the Mineworkers bring us up-to-date on their national strike and fight for a decent contract.

We had a member of the Farm Workers explain the need to free the workplace of grapes grown with pesticides toxic to farmworkers and to consumers. And we distributed videotapes on the grape boycott to the participants to take back to use at their local meetings. You should be receiving these same videotapes in the next few weeks.

On behalf of the International

Union, I pledged both unions the support of OPEIU wherever and whenever we can give it.

Earlier in the year the International had a program for full-time staff and officers in Washington, D.C. Our purpose was the education of the delegates on several issues of vital importance to all working people, not just union members—NAFTA, health care reform, striker replacement prohibitions, taxation of health benefits.

Each delegate met with legislators from his or her home district to record our position on all of these issues. We pressed for universal, cost-effective health care delivery, no taxation of health care benefits, the need for labor law reform and outlawing of striker replacements, no NAFTA.

Again experts, special speakers were called in. Tommy Owens of the AFL-CIO Legislative Department, and Karen Ignani, Director of the Employees Benefit Department at the AFL-CIO, briefed participants on proposed legislation. They told delegates what arguments they were likely to encounter from legislators and what appropriate counter-arguments might be. It enhanced the program and improved our lobbying skills.

So, 1993 was a successful year in terms of training programs, as it was on the bargaining fronts. But it can be more effective. We can reach more members.

You owe it to yourselves to participate in these programs. You owe it to your members to be better educated to represent them and to send them and stewards for that training, too.

I thank all of those local unions who participated in 1993, who gave up their weekends because they cared. Because of what they learned, 1994 will be a brighter year for all of us.

Season's Greetings

We at the Office and Professional Employees International Union wish all of our members, staff and officers the best of holiday seasons.

Together as union members we have worked to improve the lives of our families and children—children like these at our recent New York City Labor Day Parade. We work to improve our own working and home lives now. We seek to improve their future lives. In fact, they are our future.

May all of our children, you and your families enjoy good health and happiness in the coming year.

John Kelly
President

Gilles Beauregard
Secretary-Treasurer

Michel Lajeunesse
Canadian Director

Executive Board:

Thomas Babb

Janice Best

Carolyn Combs

Michael Goodwin

Kathleen Kinnick

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