



SOLIDARITY is our STRENGTH

UAW Local 2322



UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE, AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA

Volume 2, Issue 4

THE UNION FOR ALL WORKERS

March, April, 1999

LOCAL 2322 REPRESENTING

WORKERS AT:

HAMPSHIRE COMMUNITY ACTION COMMISSION * IMPERIAL WALLPAPER * NONOTUCK CHILDCARE CENTER * NORTHAMPTON CENTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCHOOL AND RESIDENCE * PROVIDENCE HOSPITAL * SERVICE NET * SHARE GROUP * SPRINGFIELD ACTION COMMISSION * SPRINGFIELD DAY NURSERY * SPRINGFIELD TELEMARKETING GROUP * TRICOUNTY YOUTH PROGRAMS * UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS - AMHERST * WESTERN MASS COSH*

As we continue to strive for unity through out our diverse Local your input is needed. If you are interested in writing about your unit please let us know. Letters to the editor, pictures and suggestions are welcome. Suggestions for distributing this news letter would also be greatly appreciated. Please send news letter contributions to:

News Letter
UAW Local 2322
243 King St
Northampton, MA 01060

HCAC a unit in

Your Local Union

Hampshire Community Action Commission is an Anti-Poverty Agency. These community based agencies were created in the 1960's as a part of the "War on Poverty". The mission statement of HCAC speaks to empowering the low income community members of Hampshire County.

Despite the progressive roots of the agency and its empowering mission statement it has been a struggle to have the agency recognize it's employees as low income members of the community and to support their empowerment.

Under the HCAC Umbrella are numerous programs and projects. The two largest programs are daycare and Head Start. The Agency consist of 13 different locations in 6 different towns across Hampshire County.

Other programs include Housing, Organizing, Child Care Focus, First Call for Help, and Women Infant and Child nutrition program-WIC.

This unit has been organized for over twenty years and has had its share of union manage-

ment conflict. The current contract has strong concepts addressing the use of temporary employees and the contract has been used as guide for daycare and Head Start programs across the state.

An ongoing issue for this unit has been the isolation of sites, union members and managers.

Recently in an effort to get the union and management (not just Central Administration - but all the various Program directors) on the same page in regards to contract implementation, the Union Management Community has agreed to create management

trainings on certain contractual issues.

Union members from HCAC have historically provided strong leadership not only within their unit but also on a Local Union level. HCAC workers have filled the following Locally elected seats of Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Trustee and President, as well as serving on Local committees.

Thank you HCAC Union members for building strength and stability in you Local Union



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Memories of an HCAC Union Member , STG-Worker Owned,
Unification Legislative Conference,
Street Heat in Action, Workers Memorial Day

My Memories of Forming a Union

by Brooks Ballenger

My first memories of the union at HCAC are from the mid 1970's. Although I wasn't employed by HCAC, at that time, several of my lefty friends told that there was an organizing drive going on. I remember several HCAC Board Meetings in which several hundred spectators came to support the drive. There was also a determined opposition to the idea. Since the big push for unionizing came from the day care program, the Board proposed eliminating that program. After several contentious meetings, about half the board resigned and a new executive director < John Fisher, was hired. The new born accepted the idea of the union and began negotiations.

HCAC originally organized with 1199 Hospital Workers Union, which was progressive nationally, but turned out to be difficult to work with in MA. Around 1980, we switched to District 65, which was affiliated with the United Auto Workers. Our Organizer was Leslie Sullivan. HCAC Burt Mason - who we considered to be a union busting lawyer - to conduct the negotiations. Among his tactics was reading "laws" that turned out not to be laws. The union membership decided to go for health insurance and good vacation and sick leave, feeling that these were more secure than higher wages. Our first contract increased all these benefits and wages significantly.

I began working at HCAC as a daycare teacher in 1979. My first day on the job, I got a call from Denise Kennedy (then a teacher now a manager) saying

there was a job action being held at the Project Directors meeting. She explained that Burt Mason and the Executive Director had been investigating challenging the union's right to organize non daycare employees in all the other programs. A group of union members entered the meeting uninvited, and told the directors that any further attempts to pursue the approach would be seen as full scale union-busting and dealt with accordingly. This action was successful and HCAC dropped the idea. I later heard that some of the program directors had been vocal in agreeing with the union that the administration had to just accept that the union was here.



Clare Higgins was a very enthusiastic and committed participant in all the union activities at HCAC. She eventually went on to work as an organizer for the union. She is now program director of daycare. Susan DeMaria followed in her footsteps - first participating in HCAC union activities as a Head Start home visitor, and then becoming an organizer for the union.

The union has always been hard to develop. There is always a core of activists and a large group who are much less involved. We've had to work hard to prevent people from getting burned out. Somehow, though, we have always found

enough people to make it work. During the years we have won better wages and benefits and created a stronger position for ourselves in relation to management. Of course we struggle against the low wages and status the human services workers in general endure. There is always a tension between what can be won on the local level, and issues that can only be addressed on the state or national level.

It has also been interesting to me to see how people move from active roles in the union into management. As management, they become much more focused on maintaining a stable budget and less aware of the average worker's point of view. So, we union members have an important role in reminding them of our concerns. On the other hand, I have often see union members get needlessly antagonistic towards managers at times. I feel it's important to see that, in the larger sense, and they are equally under the thumb of the state and the powerful. There are sometimes issues where middle managers are hoping that the union will challenge some unfair policy. I also find that we usually do better negotiating with managers from a tone of respect and understanding.

The union and the contracts we have now, are the fruits of many years of labor by many courageous people. It's a struggle that will go on for a long time to come. But we ought also take time to appreciate how far we have come.

LOCAL
2322
OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
THIA HADGE

VICE
PRESIDENT
JEFF
BALFOUR

FINANCIAL
SECRETARY
MARY
ROBISON

RECORDING
SECRETARY
JENNY
MIRIAM

TREASURER
NANCY
DEPROSSE

GUIDE
TOM TAAFFE

SARGENT
AT ARMS
MATTHEW
CLARK

TRUSTEE
ERIK OLSEN
&
BILL HESSE

LOCAL
2322
STAFF

NANCY DE-
PROSSE

THIA HADGE

SUE
KELIHER

JENNY
MIRIAM

FLO STERN

N.C.C.F. Ratifies Contract

by Seth Hamond

After over a year of meetings, arguments and conversations, the N.C.C.F. Residential unit has a new contract. We were able to get guaranteed step increases, time and a half for holidays, funding for education, the formation of a Labor-Management committee and more.

Many of us are new employees and have learned a great deal during this process. We hope that the new committee will be a place that our con-

cerns and ideas will be heard and dealt with fairly and effectively. The best part is that management is now contractually obligated to attend these committee meetings and will certainly be held to it.

Much thanks to Local Staff, Flo Stern for her guidance and assistance during this long, arduous process and kudos to her ability to royally piss off management lawyers. Thanks to the Region for sending a member

that when we stick together, anything can be accomplished. Better working conditions help keep quality staff and allows us to give the children we work with the services they need.

In addition to representing workers of Northampton Center For Children and Families Residence,, we represent teachers and other workers at the N.C.C.F. School.

Leadership Week At Black Lake

by Jeff Balfour

I attended the Leadership Development training at the Walter Reuther Family Education Center at Black Lake, Michigan from March 21-26. I joined over 300 other local officers, committee members, and stewards for a week of intensive classes on labor history, political challenges facing labor today, strategic planning, and membership mobilization.

In the morning classes, we learned how to plan union campaigns centered on membership mobilization. We spent the week on exercises and learning from each other's diverse experiences. The afternoon classes focused on the history of the UAW and politics. A highlight was an inspiring video about former UAW President Walter Reuther. We also learned about the need to protect Social Security.

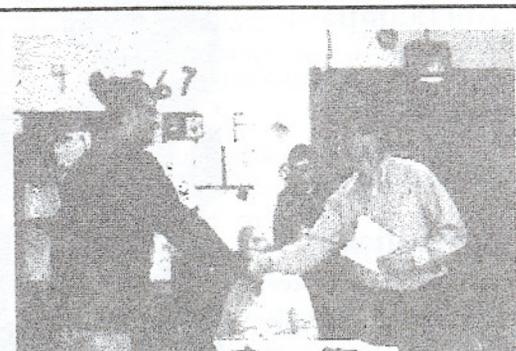
My week at Black Lake was amazing. Everybody was friendly and fun. At Black Lake, "Solidarity" is more than just a slogan. I was surrounded by over 300 of the best and most inspired unionists I've ever met. Their energy and dedication to bettering the lives of all working people was inspiring. Many of my brothers and sisters were excited to see someone as young as 26 involved in the union.

The brothers and sisters in my class were interested in our local. I was one of the few officers from a TOP (Technical, Office, and Professional) local in my class. They were excited to discover that graduate employees, telemarketers; mental health service workers were in the UAW. After the first day, my brothers and sisters in my class affectionately referred me to as "Umass."

I was elected to be the spokesperson from our class.

I gave a speech in front of all of the delegates on the last day of the training. I was interrupted by applause twice when I thanked the delegates for their example and inspiration. I was also interrupted when I proudly declared that there was at least one member of the union who was motivated, not apathetic, and fired up.

I urge all members of the Local to attend training at Black Lake if they can. You will never forget what you do and who you meet.



Bob Madore, Assistant Director of Region 9A, congratulates Jeff Balfour after swearing him as Vice President of our Local, at the January Joint Council meeting.

Jeff is a 3rd year graduate employee who has completed a masters in History and is currently enrolled in the Labor Studies Program.

Ford Rouge Explosion

UAW Leaders offer their condolences

UAW leaders offered their condolences to those Local 600 members who were killed or injured in the Feb. 1st explosion at Ford Motor Co.'s Rouge facility in Dearborn Mich.

"It looked like someone dropped a bomb on the place," said UAW Local 600 President Jerry Sulivan.

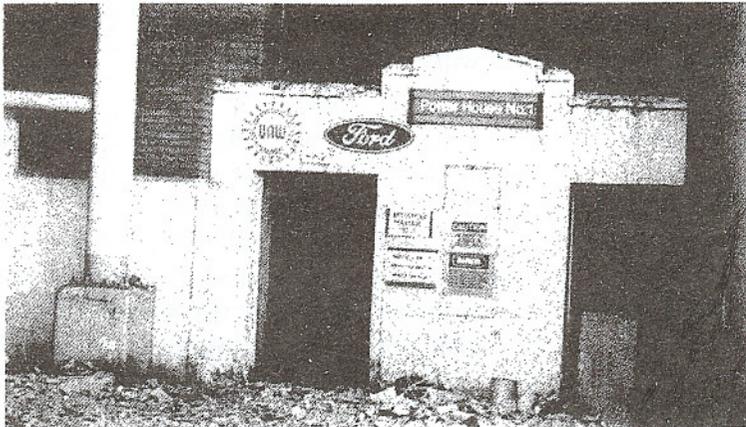
"Our entire union is deeply saddened by the loss of life and severe injuries that have been suffered by our members, and we will assist those members and

their families who have been affected by this unfortunate accident," said UAW President

Ford Department, praised the work of UAW members, the Ford Motor Co. and emergency workers from surrounding communities who responded to the accident.

A fund has been jointly set up by Ford and Local 600 for contributions: "The Rouge Family Fund"

Comerica Bank,



Ford Motor Co.'s Rouge Power House No. 1 after the Feb 1st explosion

Stephen P. Yokich.
UAW Vice President Ron Gettelfinger, who directs the union's

P.O. Box 75000
Detroit, MI
48275-7650

-UAW-LUPA

WE Remember...

Donald Harper,
58, pipefitter,
35 years seniority

Cody Boatwright,
51, maintenance welder,
20 years seniority

Warren Blow,
51, power service operator leader,
29 years seniority

Ken Arseneau,
45, pipefitter,
29 years seniority

Ron Mortiz,
46, skilled welder, former union member

- UAW-LUPA

Workers Memorial Day

April 28th Wednesday

Northampton

12:00
City Hall
Main St.

Springfield

10:00 a.m.
Apremont Triangle
In front of the
Labor Council.



Please join us to commemorate the Day.

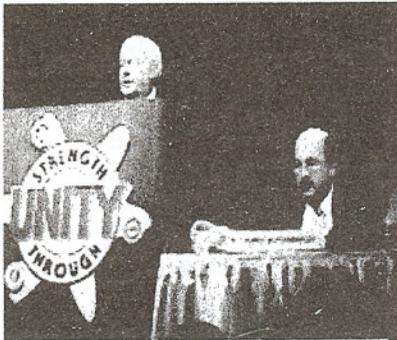
For more information call (413) 731-0760
or the Local Office 584-4905.

This event is endorsed by the AFL-CIO, the state AFL-CIO, Local Labor Councils and COSH organizations.

Strength through Unity Unification Legislative Conference

by Thia Hodge and Jeff Balfour

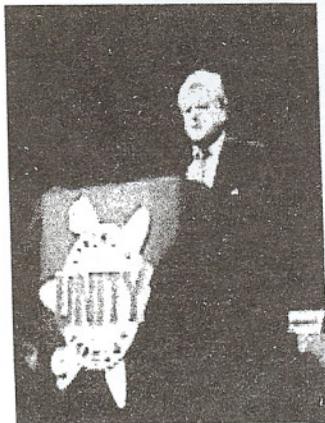
Local President Thia Hodge and Vice-President Jeff Balfour attended the Unification Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. on February 21-24, 1999. Over 3400 delegates, representing over 2 million workers, from the



AFL-CIO President Sweeney, President of the IAM-International Association of Machinists Buffenbarger.

Steelworkers, Machinists, and UAW attended the conference. This was the first time that delegates and leaders from the three merging unions—UAW, IAM, and USWA—came together to coordinate their legislative agenda.

The Conference consisted of guest speakers, including President Bill Clinton, Edward Kennedy, and President of the AFL-CIO John Sweeney. These and many other speakers responded to labor's vision of organizing and progressive political action for America's working families.



Massachusetts Senator Ted Kennedy

Delegates attended workshops and spoke about the legislative priorities of labor in the upcoming election. These are; resisting the privatization of Social Security and Medicare; defending affirmative action; fighting for international workers' and human rights; and defending American jobs.

After the trainings, delegates lobbied their representatives on Capitol Hill. We spoke with staff from Senator Kennedy's and then Kerry's office about the issues facing labor today. We also spoke with Representative John Olver about Social Security, Medicare, the dumping of foreign steel in the U.S., affirmative action, and strengthening Legal Services in Massachusetts.

The conference was an excellent opportunity to learn about the issues facing workers in America and lobby our representatives in Washington D.C. It was also an opportunity to make friends with our brothers and sisters in not only the UAW, but also the Steelworkers' and Machinists' unions. **The power of labor and America's workers was clear at the conference. The source of the power is best described by the conference's slogan—Strength Through Unity.**

Social Security Facts and Figures

Social Security is not only the foundation of the retirement income for America's workers and their families; it provides insurance against unexpected disability or death. Right wing members of Congress are proposing that the Social Security system be privatized and the system's funds be invested in the stock market. This may result in short term gains for workers, but the stock market is unstable. A decline in the stock market would devastate retired workers and other

workers receiving benefits.

Why workers should care about Social Security—Social Security provides family protections for retirement, disability, and death that are not available anywhere else. Social Security provides benefits for a worker's family and spouse and the benefits never run out.

Why UAW members should care about social security—Most companies no longer offer pension plans for workers. Social Security will provide the majority of retired Local 2322 member's incomes.

Why women should care about Social Security—Social Security benefits are 72% of the average retired woman's income. Only 26% of women receive a Social Security pension.

Why young workers should care about Social Security—A 20 year-old worker has a 30%



In front of the Capitol Building Willie Desnoyers State CAP Chair, Jeff Balfour V. P. of Local 2322, Lisa Davis MA Women's Community Chair Not Pictured Thia Hodge UAW Local 2322 President.

chance of becoming disabled and unable to work before retirement. Social Security benefits replace up to 80% of an average 25 year-old worker's income that dies leaving two young children and a spouse. Social Security is like a \$328,000 disability insurance plan.

Why public employees should care about Social Security—Social Security benefits provide a safety net for public employees whose spouses and family members work in the private sector.

Let your Representative in Washington know that you say "NO" to any plan to privatize Social Security.

Springfield Telemarketing Group Worker Owned

by Chris Mackin

History of Springfield Telemarketing Group

Springfield Telemarketing Group (STG) is a company formed by working people. When a prior employer (Share Group of Somerville, MA) decided to close its Springfield facility on February 2, 1998, thirty-five (35) workers and managers were out of a job. One month later, on March 6, 1998, this same group was up and running with a new name, Springfield Telemarketing Group (STG), and the bare outlines of a corporate structure in place. Almost exactly one year further on, February 1, 1999, STG officially converted into an employee-owned corporation comprised of callers and managers jointly committed to a successful and stable future in the telemarketing industry.

In response to the shut down Thia Hadge made a request to Regional Director Phil Wheeler to have Mike Schappini from the International Research Department to evaluate the situation. The idea of forming an employee owned company in response to the shut down of Share Group Springfield was raised. Local # 2322 had been representing former Share Group Springfield workers and felt responsible for devising a strategy to save these jobs. The employee ownership idea immediately appealed to rank and file workers and managers, many of whom are single parents relying on these jobs to support their families.

With financial assistance provided by the Corporation for Business Work and Learning of the State of Massachusetts, consultants with a specialty in employee ownership (Ownership Associates, Inc. of Cambridge, MA and Kokkinis & Associates of New York, New

York) were hired to investigate the feasibility of a buy-out. When their initial study proved positive, a meeting was arranged with Mayor Michael Albano. With backing from the Mayor, the Community and Economic Development Office of the City of Springfield provided necessary additional support.

An Employee Buy-out Committee comprised of labor, management and the consultants worked closely for nearly a year re-establishing relationships with customers and formulating a plan for STG to succeed on its own as an independent enterprise. Unlike some departing employers, Share Group of Somerville, MA acted responsibly by granting time and negotiating in good faith with its former employees. On February 1, 1999 negotiations were complete and fourteen (14) workers and managers who had signed formal stock subscription agreements became employee owners of Springfield Telemarketing Group. More employees will join in as shareholders as STG grows in the future.

Ownership Structure

Employee ownership of American corporations is a growing trend. Over 10,000 companies employing over 11 Million employees work for employee-owned companies across the nation. Well known national examples of employee ownership include United Airlines (55% employee owned) and Publix Supermarkets of Florida. Local examples of employee owned companies include two plastics manufacturers, Maryland Mold of Pittsfield, MA which employs 90 people and

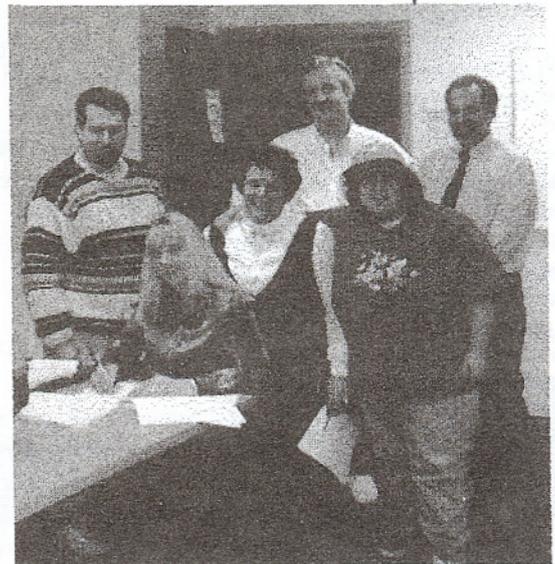
Nypro, Inc. of Clinton, MA which employs 3,000 people in facilities around the world.

Springfield Telemarketing Group is organized as a modified Co-operative Corporation. Class A Membership Shares are held by workers and managers and will perpetually comprise at least 67% or 2/3^{ds} of the value of the corporation. Share ownership is voluntary and open to any employee who has worked a minimum number of hours for the company and approved by its Board of

"Telemarketing is difficult work, getting paid a union wage and having a piece of the company makes all the difference in the world."

Deb McCarthy

continued on next page



The First Share Being Signed

Buy Committee members: Bill Wagner CEO, Deb McCarthy - union member, Vera McCormick - management, Chris Mackin - consultant, Thia Hadge - Local 2322 President, Harry Kokkinis - consultant. Committee members not pictured Angel Cordeau - union member and Gloria Blackwell - management.

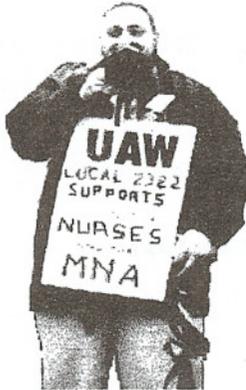
Street Heat In Action

by Jeff Balfour

On February 12, Street Heat—the AFL-CIO's union membership mobilization plan—came to the Valley with a bang. Members

and representatives from over twenty unions in the Valley attended a rally and informational picket line in support of nurses at Mercy Hospital in Springfield. Nurses at Mercy are fighting for a new contract. They want to increase staffing levels to better patient care at the hospital. They also want increases wages and benefits.

Local 2322 was loud and proud in its support for the nurses. Local officers, staff, and many members walked the informational picket line in front of Mercy Hospital



Luis Torres speaks out

and handed out flyers to patients entering and leaving the Hospital. Members from Springfield Telemarketing Group, graduate employees from the University of MA, as well as several members from the newly organized Providence Hospital came out to support the nurses. Luis Torres spoke at the rally about the issues facing workers at both hospitals and the need for solidarity.

This was the first Street Heat event in Western MA. It was a success. We showed Mercy Hospital that every union in Western Massachusetts supports the nurses in their struggle



for respect, dignity, and quality patient care.



James Tobler, Oona Adams, Larry Ierner, Jeff Balfour, Richard McPlamer, Nancy deProse, and Ron Patenaude. Not pictured Flo Stern, Thia Hadge, Allison Zimmer, Heinrich Huber, Art Nowak, Sarah Chapin, and Scott Hayden.

STG

continued

Directors. Class B Shares are reserved for management and outside investors (if necessary). In order to maintain maximum internal ownership by STG employees, all shares of departing employees must be sold back to the corporation.

STG will employ both employee owners and conventional employees for whom the ownership option may not make sense. All non-management employees, shareholders and non shareholders alike are members of UAW Local # 2322 and enjoy union wages and benefits. Non shareholding STG employees will participate in individual and company wide performance bonus plans alongside employee share-

holders. Employee shareholders will receive annual profit sharing in an amount decided by the STG Board of Directors. The STG Board of Directors is comprised of union and management personnel as well as outside professionals.

Company Strategy

At present, STG operates primarily as an "outgoing" call center, selling various products and services to targeted markets. STG's largest customer is a Financial Services, an affinity brand financial services company working for Household Finance Corporation and the AFL-CIO to market the "Union Privilege" Visa Card.

STG operates as one of two unionized telemarketing corporations in the United States and is therefore uniquely suited to be able to service the union move-

ment. Currently STG is developing a "worker to worker" program. With Union wages and benefits STG is also able to attract, train and retain some of the best callers in the telemarketing industry.



Region 9A Director Phil Wheeler congratulating CEO Bill Wagner and Local President Thia Hadge on employee ownership.

CALENDAR

**UAW Local 2322
News Letter**
243 King St.
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01060

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Jeff Balfour

Publishing:
UAW
Region
9A



UAW Local 2322 Joint Council Meeting
2nd Tuesday of the Month at 6:00 April at UMass, May in Northampton

Executive Board Meetings
4th Wednesday of the month 6:30 Northampton

Worker Memorial Day April 28
Northampton 12:00 at City Hall
Springfield 10:00am Apermont Triangle

UAW Region 9A Joint Conferences
May 20th - 23rd

WILD Summer Institute
June 25th - 27th

**Summer Scholarship Program at Black Lake -
UAW Family Education Center**

If you are interested in participating in any of these events please let your union representative know or call the Northampton Union office. 413-584-4905



UAW Local 2322
243 King St.
Northampton, Ma
01060