



Working News

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June 2004

Hampshire Educational Collaborative Workers Vote For UAW 2322

By Justin Jackson, *HEC Union Organizing Committee Member*

In This Issue

Get Your SHARE union busting in Amherst Page 2

NECC Contract the part they don't understand Page 2

Child Care Awards OCCS is proud to announce Page 3

YWCA Contract major hurdle cleared Page 3

UAW Endorses John Kerry for President Page 4

Bridge Walk For single payer healthcare Page 4

Just Like riding a horse, IPO/SEVIS fee at UMass Page 5

Vickery Runs For Governor's Council Page 5

Congratulations! 2004 UAW election results Page 6

Springfield Worker's rights under Attack Page 6

Local UAW Members Talk about their union Page 7

Union Terms Defined learn helpful unionism terms Page 8

Rowland Resigns adieu to anti-union Governor Page 9

Member Discounts from local businesses Page 9



On June 15, special education instructors, assistant teachers and aides working at Hampshire Educational Collaborative (HEC) voted by a strong two-to-one majority to form a union with UAW Local 2322. Our union now welcomes these 85 workers into the union after a hard-fought campaign which started in the fall of 2003 and continued despite a persistent anti-union campaign waged by HEC management. The new unit covers HEC employees who work with students with emotional, behavioral, learning and/or developmental disabilities in public schools and private sites throughout Hampshire County.

"I'm just really proud of the fact that a group of individuals without much power by themselves united to address our working conditions, pay and benefits," said Kelly Thibodeau, a high school special education instructor at HEC Academy in Northampton. "I think that if we can improve some of these areas we will be able to provide a better educational environment for our students."

For years HEC Special Education workers have voiced concerns over a variety of workplace problems at HEC's Alternative Learning Programs, including low pay compared to special education workers in area public schools, expensive health care insurance, chronic understaffing, lack of planning time, lack of any breaks, including lunch breaks, and poor communication and lack of respect for staff input from HEC management.

The campaign has been an uphill fight since the beginning. Initially believing they were private employees covered by the NLRB, the HEC workers had to file for a union election instead with the Massachusetts Labor Relations Commission, which oversees public employees. This pushed the date for an election back several months, giving HEC management ample time to send weekly anti-union letters packed with misinfor-

Continued on Page 3

Getting Your SHARE!

By Dennis Manley & Bob Lipon *Share Group* & Leslie Edwards, *Servicing Representative*

Share Group is a call center in Amherst, MA that does telefundraising for non-profit organizations. They have been a part of Local 2322 for ten years. Phony appears in the minutes for the Joint Policy Committee, which is the vehicle in the center for caller input into center policy.

"Phony" materialized in the Amherst Center several months ago. He is an embodiment of not only the company, but the Share experience. Phony is a symbol of the often ridiculous micro-management-esque policies of Share that have emerged since new owners bought the company and hired the notorious union busting law firm, Jackson & Lewis. The 20% above refers to a change in the amount of time callers can be off the phone (basically requiring workers to work harder for the same pay). This change violates a negotiated agreement between the union and management and we are scheduled to go to arbitration soon.

Four years ago, the top wage for workers in my shop was \$10.75 an hour. And there

had been no raises for more or less four years before that. Now, four years later, our top wage is \$12.75 an hour.

One person couldn't have done it. Ten persons couldn't have done it. But a bargaining unit of a hundred men and women, 98 per cent of whom voted to authorize a strike if we didn't get a little justice, could do it.

If you don't like belonging to a union, if you think paying dues is a burden, try the weight of paying for your health and dental coverage on your own.

If you don't like belonging to a union, if you think all the meetings are a pain, try meeting one-on-one with the boss. When they tell you your services are no longer required, they don't need a reason or they can just make one up. It's lonely in that meeting. Who you going to call?

If you don't have democracy in your workplace, you have a dictatorship. Rights are better than privileges. Privileges are bestowed upon us and can be un-bestowed; rights, once they have been fought for and won, are more permanent. But we have to protect our rights. And that's what unions are built for.



Contract Negotiations With

New England Center For Change: Or

What Part Of Good Faith Don't You Understand?

After delaying the first bargaining session for over a month, New England Center for Change management has finally met on June 9th with the union's bargaining committee to exchange proposals.

That afternoon, the anti-worker attitude of NECC management became more painfully clear than ever. Their lawyer handed our bargaining team a completely re-written contract, with take-backs on many of the articles, as well as several controversial additions. He was unwilling to discuss management's proposed changes with the union's bargaining committee, claiming that the meeting was just for an exchange of proposals. NECC management has communicated to the union their unwillingness to schedule bargaining sessions during the regular work-day, and their unwillingness, in general, to set dates and times for bargaining. It is a shame that they have seriously failed to grasp the simple concept of bargaining in good faith.

Among their suggested changes are mandatory drug-testing for all employees,

eliminating just cause discipline, extending the probationary period of a new employee to 6 months (which seriously limits their protection under the union contract and prevents them from gaining access to health benefits and sick time), no wage increases, eliminating all personal time, eliminating child care, and eliminating a worker's right to bring a grievance case to arbitration. The bargaining committee has been meeting with servicing representative Nancy Fish to plan the union's response.

This is a crucial time for New England Center for Change. Their management's current mode of operation is disturbing, based on intimidation and disrespect. They will take every inch that we allow them until the rights we have fought for in the past are completely eroded. It is up to each member of the union at NECC to stand up, now, for themselves and for their co-workers. Support the bargaining committee; stay informed; use the strength of solidarity. In unity, we can accomplish anything.

Financial Crisis At HCAC

Leads To Lay-Offs

By Brooks Ballenger, *Former HCAC Chief Steward; Local 2322 Servicing Rep*

HCAC is in crisis as you may have read in the newspaper. After several years of \$200,000 deficits in the Day Care program, Central Administration has run out of money. Tragically, this will mean that many teachers will be laid off. We have been negotiating with Central Administration on exactly how this process will take place. This resulted from problems that should have been corrected by management years ago. At the same time HCAC has been caught "borrowing" from the managers' pension plan in order to deal with their cash shortage. They did the same thing to Union members twice in the past year and a half: in the summer of 2003, and again this past spring. In the recent case, we filed a grievance in April and collected interest on the missing money in June.

This is a very difficult and upsetting time for all of us at HCAC. Some fine employees are being laid-off, while others are leaving voluntarily because of the turmoil and uncertainty. We will be meeting Wednesday June 30th to discuss our response to this mismanagement of our agency.

Springfield Day Nursery Employees Receive Child Care Awards

By Ruth Moorhouse, *Local 2322 Trustee & SDN Steward*

OCCS is proud to announce the winner of the Child Care Excellence Recognition Award. It was awarded to Nora Robinson, from Springfield Day Nursery. Nora was also awarded a plaque from OCCS for Outstanding School Age Professionalism in Child Care, in recognition of Outstanding Contribution to Education, Growth, and Healthy Development of Children in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Nora has been with SDN and a member of Local 2322 for six years. She is a Site Coordinator at Sumner Ave Elementary School in Springfield. The award was given to Nora at a luncheon award ceremony in Pittsfield, MA on April 23rd, 2004, with SDN Directors present. She also received a \$100.00 gift certificate from School Specialties of Agawam. Congratulations to

Nora from all her co-workers and from UAW Local 2322!

Ann Lafreniere, also from Springfield Day Nursery, has been awarded the Excellent Teacher Award from the West Springfield Public Schools. She was the only teacher from West Springfield and the surrounding area that won in the category of Kindergarten Day Care. There was a ceremony at the Log Cabin in March where Ann received a plaque, \$500.00 for herself, and \$250.00 for her classroom. She was chosen from a pool of 119 teachers. Ann was also given a certificate of Appreciation for mentoring Early Child Care & Education for Apprentice Training at HCC. Great job Ann, from your co-workers at SDN and from UAW Local 2322!

LOCAL 2322 REGISTERS VOTERS IN SPRINGFIELD AND NORTHAMPTON

By Ruth Moorhouse, *Local 2322 Trustee & SDN Steward*

Since early May, Servicing Rep. Leslie Edwards has been working with a group of members in the local to register voters in Springfield and Northampton. They have spent a few weekends going door-to-door to register members and non-members alike. There are definitely a number of our own members who are still not registered to vote. This is a very important election year and everybody's vote counts. Please register to vote if you haven't already! For more information, contact the local office: (800)-682-0269 or uaw2322@uaw2322.org

YWCA Contract Negotiations Update



From Left to Right – Henry Fijalkowski, Paul Desantis, Kim Milberg, & Wendy McKee. Not pictured: Art Franz, Brenda Barcome.

The union is in the midst of contract negotiations at the YWCA of Western Mass. One major hurdle we have cleared is getting language for a fair grievance procedure and just cause discipline. The bargaining committee is working hard to win a good contract for their co-workers, and their work deserves praise, appreciation, and most importantly, support from all of the union members at YWCA. Especially as we move towards negotiating economic proposals, the work of the

bargaining committee will become more of a challenge. Show them your support: get involved, stay informed, and demand that the work you do be compensated with living wages and benefits. Together, you can send a clear message to management that you, the workers, believe that you are entitled to the philosophies of empowerment promised in their mission statement. For information & updates call Tim at (413) 534-7600

EDUCATIONAL COLLABORTIVE

Continued from Page 1

mation, hold several captive meetings, and make offers to improve working conditions of questionable legality. HEC, represented by Director Joan Schuman, rejected several offers to voluntarily recognize the union, including at a March HEC Board of Governors meeting where instructors' appeals were alternatively ignored and welcomed as the first statement ever made to the Board by any member of the public in the Collaborative's entire twenty-five year history. Schuman eventually sent letters threatening cuts to programs if the union was voted in, and also cut the costs of health insurance and promised raises after the election.

"In the end, though, HEC workers listened to each other about the need to make changes and their desire to do so by joining a union," said Tim Scott, the local's organizer for the campaign. "The fact that two-thirds of them voted for the union is a strong mandate."

With that mandate the HEC workers are moving towards electing a bargaining committee and forming proposals for contract negotiations to happen in the late summer.

UAW Endorses John Kerry For President

UAW Press release, Thursday, March 25th 2004

The 18-member UAW International Executive Board today unanimously endorsed Sen. John Kerry for president.

“John Kerry has a long and consistent record of standing up for America’s working families,” said UAW President Ron Gettelfinger. “Senator Kerry shares the UAW’s belief that good jobs are worth fighting for, and he’ll work relentlessly to get America’s economy moving again – creating new jobs and keeping good jobs here.”

“John Kerry clearly recognizes that a healthy manufacturing base is vital to America’s economy – today and for future generations of American workers,” Gettelfinger continued.

“John Kerry’s commitment to civil rights, human rights, and workers’ rights – including the right to organize and bargain collectively – has been proven time and again,” Gettelfinger said. “And Senator Kerry is a forceful advocate for better and more affordable

health care, for quality public education for our children, for secure and dignified retirements for older Americans and for the rights of our veterans.”

“The choice in this year’s presidential

election couldn’t be clearer: John Kerry is the candidate with the values, ideas, and integrity we need in the White House,” said Gettelfinger. “The UAW is proud to support John Kerry for president.”

Got Real Estate?

By John McGrath, V.P. Local 2322

The most important part of financial security is the ability to earn a living wage. Through our unity we can continue to build and improve that through our Union. Typically, the next vital step is one that most of us will have to initiate and create individually: that being homeownership. Other than a gift, marriage or inheritance the only way it happens is to take that first step and learn what you need to do. First time homebuyer programs and assistance are there for the taking. Fact is, as I found out ten years ago, if you can pay rent you can

own your own home and invest in your future rather than your landlords.

Almost any obstacle can be overcome – like fixing credit or no down-payment – but as with our union, the process doesn’t happen without involvement. I would like to look into the possibility of holding a first time homebuyer seminar. Interest rates are still very low and are expected to start to rise so now time really is money – yours. Please call 534-7600 so we can start a list to see if the interest is there. Make it happen!

Bridge Walk For Single Payer Healthcare

By Ron Patenaude, Local 2322 President

On Saturday June 19th Western Mass Jobs with Justice, Mass Senior Action Council and the Pioneer Valley Labor Council cosponsored a bus to Boston to bring people to the “Bridge Walk for Healthcare” event put on by JwJ. They filled one bus of about 50, but had to cancel the second bus they originally thought they might need.

The UAW/GEO had several members in attendance that either took the bus or drove to Boston to take part in the walk.

The marchers started in Cambridge at Kendell Square in Cambridge and marched to the Boston Commons where they were informed and entertained. Comedian Billy Tingle MC’d. He made light of politicians’ claim that “we” can’t afford single payer healthcare, joking that is what the politicians have and as Strom Thurman lived to be 100 we should ask for the same plan.

Other speakers gave testimony to how they were affected by the poor quality of their healthcare and the difficulties they encountered due to their uninsured or underinsured status; all

emphasized the need for a single payer system. One speaker was an immigrant who lost her insurance after a change in the system was implemented by the Romney administration. She was pregnant and would now have to put her new son or daughter on a waiting list behind thousands of others for healthcare benefits under the new guidelines. A representative of the Massachusetts Nursing Association spoke to the need to set staffing levels to provide the best care to their patients. Obviously the hospitals and other care facilities that use nurses are opposed to having set guidelines. What a surprise!

There was discussion on the savings that could be realized if the different insurance companies were replaced with a single payer system by eliminating excessive and redundant red tape and the “profits” those systems reap.

As a healthcare worker for the last ten years I would agree that the insurance companies (many of which are “not for profit”) do contribute a great deal to the ever growing costs of healthcare. I think another area that is not being discussed or

examined, however, is the “non-profit” status that many of these healthcare facilities claim. Often the executives and upper management make astronomical salaries while the direct care workers often can’t make a living wage. There is something drastically wrong with a system where the farther away from actual patient care you get the more money you make. Yet another issue: if most of a program’s funding comes from state and federal monies, are those funds being spent on union busting or to pay lawyers to fight our members at contract negotiations? Not a good use of limited healthcare dollars if you ask me!

There are 2 bills on this issue I think we should get our members on board for. The first is HB #2272 which instructs the Division of Healthcare and Finance Policy to conduct a study on the feasibility of a single payer system and the projected costs of implementing and SAVINGS that could be realized. The other is the single payer system bill itself — HB #686 — which would create a single payer system for the state of Massachusetts. I would urge members to call your legislators to voice your support for these bills.

Just Like Riding A Horse

By James A.W. Shaw, *Former UAW Local 2322 President and Sociology Teaching Associate*

Since December, GEO/UAW Local 2322 has been fighting a \$65/semester fee imposed on international students holding the F-1 or J-1 visa. Our fight has been on many fronts, including with rallies, pickets, petitions, demonstrations, and a hunger strike.

Along with these “on the ground” mobilizations, we have been fighting the fee through legal means as well. On Tuesday, May 4, GEO argued before a labor arbitrator (per our contract’s grievance procedure) that the university’s new IPO/SEVIS fee violates the GEO contract in two ways. First, we argued that the fee violates the Non-Discrimination Clause (Article 15), which states that the university may not discriminate on the basis of national origin. Second, we argued the IPO/SEVIS fee violates Article 33 (Tuition and Curriculum Fee Scholarship Waivers), which protects against the university imposing a curriculum fee in disguise. Because the curriculum fee is an alternative to tuition that the university charges to bolster its funding

during times of budget cuts, we believe that the IPO/SEVIS fee is a de facto curriculum fee since it exists only to bolster the IPO budget. This is in contrast to UMass’ argument that this is a “user fee,” which is charged to someone who uses a service. However, the IPO provides a service to the campus by allowing international students and scholars to come to UMass.

The university not only challenged our arguments, but their attorney, who works for the notoriously anti-union law firm Seyfarth Shaw (no relation!), tried threatening the arbitrator with the claim that he would be violating state law if he ruled in our favor, and that the university would appeal any victory on our part in state court. This attorney, Joseph Ambash, argued that state law gives UMass the exclusive right to charge any fee it wants, and that we cannot challenge any fee under our contract (even if it’s discriminatory!). We strongly reject this argument.

Ambash also equated the IPO Fee to

other fees such as the Horseback Riding Fee. He actually argued that it’s no worse to discriminate against horseback riders than it is to discriminate against international students.

By June 7, our respective attorneys must submit a legal brief (summarizing the evidence and arguments) to the arbitrator, who then has 30 days to render a written decision. Therefore, we will not have a decision from the arbitrator until at least July 7. I want to be clear about one final point, which is that because this is a grievance filed under our union contract, a victory would only directly benefit graduate student employees, the only group that the union legally represents. However, a victory for grad employees would provide momentum for a larger campus-wide victory.

This legal process provides an important protection and avenue of recourse. But it is not the most important avenue. GEO members must keep up the fight through on the ground mobilization.

UAW Member Peter Vickery Runs For Governor’s Council

By Leo Maley, GEO / LOCAL 2322 Member

The UAW has endorsed local UAW member, Peter Vickery, in his campaign for the Democratic nomination for Governor’s Councillor in the 8th Councillor District. The 8th District covers 93 towns and cities in Western Massachusetts.

Peter Vickery is a UAW member (Local 1981), a Progressive Democrat, and an attorney. Several years ago he filed the lawsuit that forced House Speaker Tom Finneran to schedule the Northampton special election after Finneran had refused to do so. He also helped found Fairvote Massachusetts, which supports progressive election reforms such as Instant Runoff Voting and Proportional Representation.

You may not have heard of the Governor’s Council, but it’s an important office and this is an important race. The eight elected members of the Governor’s Council are the only people who get to

vote “yes” or “no” on the Governor’s judicial nominations. The Governor’s Council screens all judicial appointments and clerk-magistrate nominees as well as nominees to the Industrial Accidents Board (IAB), the body that rules on Workers Compensation claims. Governor Mitt Romney has an anti-worker, anti-equal justice agenda for the courts and we need to elect progressive pro-labor candidates to the Governor’s Council in order to stop him.

Judicial independence is under threat in Massachusetts. Conservatives in both major parties are putting lots of political pressure on the judiciary to make it less friendly to ordinary workers and more friendly to corporate interests. Peter supports the Goodridge decision and he believes that judges should be able to make decisions free from political pressure and from corporate control.

The endorsement was voted on by the

UAW’s Western Massachusetts Community Action Program (CAP) Council, which represents UAW Locals 2322, 2320, and 1981. Peter Vickery was also endorsed by the State CAP Council, representing UAW locals and UAW retirees across Massachusetts.

Peter Vickery can only help us if he wins his election. It is up to us—individually and as a union—to get behind our fellow UAW member’s campaign. Peter needs additional campaign volunteers and many more small money contributions in order to win the crucial September 14 Democratic primary.

To help Peter Vickery’s campaign, to make a modest on-line contribution, or for more information, see his website, www.votevickery.com or call his campaign manager, UAW 2322 member Leo Maley at Leo@votevickery.com or 413-256-4799.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Spring 2004 Elections Results:

UAW LOCAL 2322 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS FOR 2004-2007:

PRESIDENT: *Ron Patenaude, Providence Hospital*
VICE PRESIDENT: *John McGrath, Providence Hospital*
RECORDING SECRETARY: *Nancy deProsse, GEO*
FINANCIAL SECRETARY/TREASURER: *Dave Kotker, Share*
TRUSTEES: *Ruth Moorhouse, SDN; Anthony Ratcliff, GEO;*
Bob Lipton, Share
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: *Susan Carrier, HCAC*
GUIDE: *Sarah Larkin, Share*

UAW LOCAL 2322 JOINT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES FOR 2004-2007:

The Joint Council is our membership body composed of representatives from each worksite, proportionally distributed according to the size of the work sites. It decides policy of the local, and is above the Executive Board in the union's hierarchy. The JC meets monthly, and decides issues like the local's budget, whether to arbitrate grievances, endorsements and other significant policy issues. Monthly meetings rotate between Springfield, Holyoke, and Amherst. Since we are an amalgamated local, the Joint Council is an important forum for communication and decision making with representatives from other shops. If you want a chance to be involved with the local on a higher level, and want to learn more about the role our local plays in a larger context, and see how your workplace fits into that picture, this is where to come. **To nominate yourself for a seat on the Joint Council, contact the local office by July 30th.** Elections for a particular worksite will only be conducted by members of that worksite, meaning that each worksite elects its own representatives to Joint Council. Representation to the Joint Council is based on the size of the work site. Therefore, every work site shall have two representatives except as follows: GEO=31 reps.; HCAC=3; Providence=3; RA Union=7; ServiceNet=5. The term of office begins June 1, 2004 and continues through May 2007. Call for more info: (800) 682-0269; (413) 534-7600

HCAC: *two open seats*

NONOTUCK: *Michelle Sullivan; one open seat*

HEC: *two open seats*

SERVICENET: *Karen Hettlinger; Nancy Fish; three open seats*

SHARE: *Josh Marx; one open seat*

NEW ENGLAND CENTER FOR CHANGE: *two open seats*

GEO: *Bill Bassham; James Campbell; Leslie Edwards; Amy Hines; Leo Maley; Mark Nelson; Amanda Plumb; Tim Scott; 21 open seats*

CUTCHINS: School Unit – *two open seats;*

Residential Units – *two open seats*

SDN: *Marie Belden; one open seat*

RA UNION: *seven open seats*

WMCOSH: *two open seats*

SPCA: *two open seats*

PROVIDENCE: *two open seats*

MT HOLYOKE: *two open seats*

GODDARD: *two open seats*

YWCA: *two open seats*

An Injury To One Is An Injury To All

A member of UAW Local 2322 recently lost everything in a fire that destroyed her home. If you as an individual would like to make a donation directly to this member, please contact Leslie Edwards at 413-522-1559 for more information.

Springfield Worker's Rights Under Attack

By Ron Patenaude, *Local 2322
President & former Chief Steward at
Providence Hospital*

If anyone was unsure of Mitt Romney and Eric Kriss' agenda concerning unions (and the National Republican party for that matter), recent attempts in Springfield to shove a governing board down the throats of Springfield's elected officials and citizens should leave no doubt as to their intent. The brazen attack on workers' rights sought to eliminate collective bargaining agreements for the city's union and civil service workers under the guise of emergency fiscal need.

Anyone paying attention should be appalled by the blatant distortions and outright lies that have been formulated around this and other financial issues in our State and perpetrated by the starve the poor, tax refunds for the rich club, of which Romney and Kriss are Gold Card members.

Now more than ever we need our unions to be strong to fight these latest attacks on our rights. The old axiom "an injury to one is an injury to all" has never been more applicable. If we allow our fellow union brothers' and sisters' rights to be violated now, we are all at risk. It will only be a matter of time before they try to expand on their success if we allow this to happen; there is no telling who will be next.

Please take the time to call and write your legislators and tell them not to fall prey to this sham. Write a letter to the editor of your local paper: tell them how important our rights to organize, join, and support unions are. If you're not registered to vote please do so: the direction and future of our State and country is at stake.

UAW Local 2322 Members Talk About Their Union

I have definitely personally benefited from being a member of a UAW Local 2322. The power to negotiate wages, benefits and working conditions really affirms my self-concept as a caring, competent, committed professional. The last time we negotiated our wages, we did a survey of pay rates at child care centers in our area - both union and non union - and found that our wages were already better than many other comparable schools. I attribute this to the fact that we are unionized. I feel that having workers who are unionized has benefited our school as a whole. Our job turnover rates are lower, our teachers are more invested in the workplace and everyone is happier.

Michelle Sullivan, Nonotuck Community Child Care Center.

I have worked for SDN for 3 years now. When I first started I found out that I was being paid the wrong pay scale for the position I was hired in to. I spoke to management and they would not hear anything I had to say. I then spoke to my Union Steward and Union Rep and they worked with me to get the back pay that was due to me. It took some time to deal with management and to receive my money, but it was really worth it.

Grissel Colon, Springfield Day Nursery.

It has taken a long time, but justice has prevailed. In 2001 the Office for Child Care Services offered our Agency the opportunity to apply for money for the workers in its Child Care Focus program - about \$2000 in bonuses for each union worker. The Agency director decided not to apply for the money - he did not inform the workers that the offer had even been made until it was too late to get the money. He claimed it was unfair to the other workers in the agency.

We organized. A large majority of all the workers signed a protest letter, which was published in the newspaper, a grievance was filed and denied at step one, step two and step three. We eventually went through arbitration, which resulted in us winning half of our money. The agency still refused to give us the money and appealed in federal court. As they had all along, Local 2322 stood by us - now we had union lawyer to fight for us. Finally, finally, the judge ruled in our favor.

In these economic times, it's not a lot of money, but we can all use it. As in our country, the wheels of democracy turn slowly

- by sticking together and making our voices heard, by using the tools we have as union members, we stood up for ourselves and a Federal judge agreed with us!

Susan Carrier, Hampshire Community Action Commission.

When I found out a newer less experienced coworker was making more money than me, through our union we got management to reassess my experience. I was placed at a higher pay scale and was paid retroactively for the period of over a year that I had been underpaid. The difference in pay I received was over \$1,600.

Scott Hayden, Providence Hospital.

I have been working at SNET for about 4 years and have been a steward for 4 years. A year ago, my supervisor told my coworkers and I that she was changing our schedules for times of work without checking

with us. She also didn't even check our contract before doing anything. We filed a group grievance involving at least 6 coworkers. We won the grievance. Our schedules were changed back and things seem to be going in the right direction now.

Karen Hettlinger, ServiceNet

When I was assigned to do a transport without adequate coverage according to the hospital's own policy I was suspended for questioning my manager about the safety of the situation, but through the union we grieved my suspension. The discipline was removed from my personnel file and I was paid for the 3 days I had been suspended.

The union allows me to voice my opinion and have it be heard at higher levels in management than before we were organized.

Jody Pasquini, Providence Hospital

Valley Free Radio: A Voice for the Community

By Tim Scott

Because of the process of deregulation of the telecommunications industry, which has advanced at a dangerous pace since 1986, small, local broadcasters have been exponentially decreasing in numbers. Across the country, radio listeners have been more and more subjected to the same few huge corporate broadcast entities with the same narrow musical, cultural and news perspectives.

After almost 3 years of waiting, Valley Free Radio (VFR), a project of the Northampton based Media Education Foundation, a producer and distributor of educational videos designed to inspire critical thinking about mass media, has been granted a construction permit from the FCC. The collective group has been working for almost 3 years to create a primarily volunteer run, community radio station to serve Northampton and the surrounding area. VFR has been given FCC approval to broadcast on 103.3 FM with an effective radiated power of 100 watts. The group, which was to become Valley Free Radio, first met in April of 2001. They were initially inspired by the message of the Prometheus Radio Project, which espouses the democratization of the airwaves through the proliferation of non-commercial, community-based micropower radio stations.

At this time, VFR is busy creating budget spreadsheets and completing other needed organization building steps while preparing for programming and the needed, outreach and fundraising campaigns.

Get Involved! Join VFR in creating an alternative for our area! They need your help and support! Like a union, a community radio station is only as strong as the support that it receives from the community it serves. If you have the time, energy, or expertise to support or to get involved please contact the folks at VFR at valleyfreeradio@yahoo.com or call 413-538-5788.

VFR MISSION STATEMENT

Valley Free Radio will be a non-commercial, community based and volunteer-run radio station for the Greater Northampton area. In accordance with the Media Education Foundation's mission, we seek to educate, inspire and entertain through programming that reflects the diversity of the local community. We seek to provide a space for media access and education, placing equipment, skills and critical tools in the hands of the community. We aim to serve with particular regard for those overlooked or under-represented by other media and to provide a forum for the exchange of cultural and intellectual ideas and music.

Boston Social Forum: July 23-25 at UMASS, Boston

Prior to the 2004 Democratic National Convention. A platform for the free and open discussion of progressive alternatives and organizing strategies to counter the dominant undemocratic global political and economic order. A regional forum within the existing World Social Forum process. Its slogan will be "Another World is Possible." Its goal will be to present democratic possibilities for the future of the planet in the arenas of politics, economics, science and technology, faith, and culture to its participants and to the public at large. Info: Boston Social Forum, 33 Harrison Ave., 4th floor, Boston MA 02111; Phone 617-338-9966; emailto: info@bostonsocialforum.org; www.bostonsocialforum.org

Local 2322 would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to the following people for the outstanding work they do each day: *Leslie Edwards, Nancy Fish, Tim Scott, Ron Patenaude, Samantha Gerolimatos & Jeremy Brown.* Invaluable help has also been provided by: *Henry Fijalkowski, Ruth Moorhouse, Justin Jackson, the Elections Committee, the Joint Council & E-Board, Christopher Smith* of Hatfield Printing, *Martha McLean* of Pioneer Mail Services, and all of the members who have put time aside: to work as stewards and bargaining committee members, and to attend labor-management and membership meetings. What you have achieved through this work is truly remarkable.

Solidarity —
Emily Cooney,
Editor, *Working News*.

Some Union Terms Defined

By Justin Jackson, HEC Instructor

For all of you newcomers to unionism and the UAW, here are some commonly used terms and their definitions you may find helpful.

Arbitration: A method of settling a labor-management dispute by having an impartial third party decide the issue (usually a binding decision). Kind of like having a blind date in a jail: you'll go there if you have to, but it is something you should try to avoid.

Bargaining Unit: A group of workers who bargain collectively with the employer. At best, more powerful when acting as a unit (union) than the sum of its parts (just a bunch of individuals); at worst, individuals who bargain away their benefits and rights when they can't stand united against the boss.

Collective Bargaining: A process in which workers, through their bargaining committee, deal as a group to determine wages, hours and other conditions of employment in negotiations with an employer. Normally the result of this is a **contract**. Sometimes, however, a strike or other actions may be required in order to encourage your employer to see the wisdom of your suggestions.

COLA: Cost-of-living Agreement, otherwise known as an "escalator clause." A normal article in union contracts in which the raising and lowering of wages depends upon changes in the cost-of-living index (inflation). This is much healthier for you than soda.

Free Riders: Non-union members who receive all the benefits derived from collective bargaining without paying union dues. These folks want a piece of the pie without putting anything in the pantry.

Good Faith Bargaining: Negotiations in which two parties meet and confer at reasonable times with open minds and the intention of reaching agreement over a new contract. In other words, the leap of faith required in order to believe that your boss has your best interests in mind.

Grievance: Any type of worker dissatisfaction including violations of the contract, violations of law, violations of employer policies, violations of fair treatment, and violations of past practices. What you file when you've been de-filed.

Just Cause: A reason an employer must give for any disciplinary action against an employee. An improvement from employer discipline before the union, when firing was called "*just because I want to fire you.*"

National Labor Relations Board: The federal agency which defines bargaining units, holds and determines eligibility for union elections and certifies new unions, and interprets and applies the National Labor Relations Act provisions which prohibit unfair labor practices. The Board which, when run by appointees of anti-labor Presidents, is used by your boss to hit you in your behind.

Rank and File: The members of a union, as distinct from union officers or staff. Derived from military term for the enlisted men who receive all the orders; but, in the best unions, the origin from which all the best ideas and commands come.

Solidarity: The concept and practice of union members and other workers fighting for each other's benefit. What those pesky Three Musketeers meant when they shouted that cheesy slogan, "All for one and one for all."

Steward: The immediate representative of union members on the shop floor who "stewards" grievances and acts as a liaison between members and the union's staff and officers. If you don't have a copy of the contract to check when you're asked to pull yet another double-shift, your steward better have it!

Strike: A work stoppage called by the union. The last and best tool in your union toolbox.

Union-Buster: A professional consultant or consulting firm which provides tactics and strategies for employers trying to prevent unionization or decertify unions. The lowest kind of vermin allowed to practice the lawyer's trade.

Weingarten (Rights): The rights of employees to request union representation during investigatory interviews if they reasonably believe that the interview could result in their being disciplined. That guy you should talk about when your boss sternly asks you to "step in my office."

Connecticut Governor John Rowland Bids Adeiu

By Ron Patenaude, President

The antiunion forces took a hit Monday June 22 when Connecticut Governor John Rowland unexpectedly gave his resignation.

Many in the labor movement will remember Rowland's unprecedented union busting efforts during the nursing home strike of 2001 when 6,500 workers at 36 nursing homes and 17 mental health facilities went out on strike, 4,000 of whom were permanently replaced, with some homes refusing to hire back workers with Rowland's blessing.

During the strike a report issued by the Connecticut Citizen Action Group showed that Rowland received over \$100,000 in campaign contributions from the nursing home industry, his biggest contributors. (No payback there.)

Rowland used the Bush administration's anti-union position to spend millions of taxpayer dollars for strikebreakers, most brought in from out-of-state. The taxpayer footed the bill to the tune of \$1.2 million a day on out-of-state strikebreakers with over

\$16 million spent, more than settlement with the unions would have cost.

Hopefully Rowland will not escape justice by resigning and the federal investi-

gation under way will uncover the truth so that he is ultimately held accountable for his actions.

UAW Membership Discounts

You are entitled to a discount at the following local businesses by presenting your UAW Local 2322 Member Card:

Whalen's Office Supply – Both the Main St. & Damon Rd. locations in Northampton.

Collective Copies – both 71 S. Pleasant St. in Amherst & 93 Main St. in Florence. (10% discount for individuals only, not for organizations or businesses).

Broadside Books – 247 Main St, Northampton

Food for Thought Books – 106 N. Pleasant St., Amherst

The Book Mill – Greenfield Road, Montague

Guild Art Centre – Main St., Northampton.

Supporting locally owned, community-minded businesses is an easy way to protest the labor practices (as well as the political & environmental policies) of corporate giants such as Staples, Barnes & Noble, etc. These discounts provide an opportunity to get a good deal and support your community. If you never received a laminated member card, or the information on your card is incorrect, please contact the local so that you may get a new one as soon as possible. (800) 682-0269, (413) 534-7600, uaw2322@uaw2322.org

Directory of Organizations

This list includes organizations we are officially affiliated with, as well as ones we support and also a few that we just think are cool.

LABOR GROUPS:

Union Voice – www.unionvoice.org

Working Families e-activist network

Jobs with Justice – www.jwj.org/localcoal/MA.org A campaign for workers rights. Take the Pledge!

Labor Notes – www.labornotes.org

Putting the Movement back in the Labor Movement

Mass AFL-CIO – www.massafscio.org

The Voice of Working Families

Labour Start – www.labourstart.org

Where trade unionists start their day on the web

COMMUNITY GROUPS:

Western Mass Neighbor to Neighbor – www.n2n.org Organizing for Working Families & Grassroots Democracy (413) 493-6666

American Friends Service Committee – www.westernmassafsc.org Peace & Justice Resources and Events in the Valley (413) 584-8975

Arise for Social Justice – www.angelfire.com/ma4/arise/index.html Arise is a low-income rights organization in Springfield

(413) 734-4948

Anti-Displacement Project –

www.a-dp.org Organizes to empower low-income families in Western MA (413) 739-7233

LGBT GROUPS:

Human Rights Campaign – www.hrc.org Working for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered rights

Freedom to Marry Coalition –

www.equalmarriage.org The gay and non-gay partnership working to win marriage equality nationally

Pride at Work – www.prideatwork.org

lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender Labor

SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS GROUPS:

United for Peace and Justice – www.unitedforpeace.org Says it all!

US Labor Against the War – www.uslaboragainstawar.org Unions come together to call for an end to the U.S. occupation in Iraq.

Solidarity – www.solidarity.igc.org A revolutionary, socialist, democratic, feminist, anti-racist organization.

War Times – www.war-times.org The First Casualty of War is Truth

Traprock Peace Center –

www.traprockpeace.org Exploring non violence, fostering community & working to end war

The Valley War Bulletin –

www.westernmassafsc.org/vwvb/ local publication covering U.S. policy and the struggle for justice at home and abroad

DEMOCRACY GROUPS:

People for the American Way – www.pfaw.org Need we say more?

Democracy Now – www.democracynow.org Independent Un-Embedded Media

Bill of Rights Defense Committee – www.bordc.org Vital information on threats to our civil liberties

SOCIAL/ POLITICAL COMMENTARY:

Mother Jones – www.motherjones.com Got MoJo?

ZNET – www.zmag.org Where the Spirit of Resistance Lives



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Directions To UAW Holyoke Office

FROM INTERSTATE 91 HEADING SOUTH:

Take exit 17 (Rte 141). Take left at bottom of exit, then follow directions below*

FROM INTERSTATE 91 HEADING NORTH:

Take exit 17 (Rte 141). Follow exit to right down hill, continue onto Dwight Street through downtown Holyoke. *Stay straight on Dwight when Rte 141 forks off to the right (7-11 will be on your left). Continue downhill; Dwight Street becomes two-way at the bottom of the hill, stay on Dwight as it crosses Maple St & High St, then look for Heritage Park on the right (Children's Museum/ Volleyball Hall of Fame); Open Square Way will be on the left immediately after Heritage Park. Dwight St ends at Main St about a block past Open Square; if you hit Main St you've gone too far.

FROM INTERSTATE 391 GOING NORTH:

Take the Main St. Holyoke exit (#5). Go right at the lights onto Main St. Take a left onto Dwight St. (about a mile) The entrance to Open Square is on your right.

FROM THE AMHERST AREA:

Go south on Rte 116, through South Hadley, across the bridge into Holyoke. There is a Water Power park on the right, and immediately after that you take a right onto Canal St. At the next light take a right onto Lyman St. Go under the bridge and directly opposite the "Wherehouse" you take a left onto Open Square Way.

To get to our office, park in the long, u-shaped parking lot – look for a FedEx box and USPS box at the entrance to two doors that are side-by-side: one red, one blue. Go in the blue door marked 252 and take the elevator (or the stairwell if you're up to it!) to the 4th floor. We are in Suite #406, first office on the right.

