

# THE 411 FORUM



*A publication for the hardworking men and women of AFSCME 411*

## THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Since our last newsletter in February, a lot of changes have occurred in the local. The membership has elected the negotiating team for the next contract and new officers and executive board members for three years. New officers include Karen Davenport our new Treasurer. Karen is an account clerk in the mental health department and became an AFSCME member after a successful campaign to bring in the clerical in the mental health department. Jill Lezotte is the new secretary. Jill works in the Victim's Rights Unit in the Prosecuting Attorney Office. Previously, Jill served as an Executive Board Member. New Executive Board Members include Mary Green from the Health Department, Laura Nixon in the Veterans Department and Sandy Pace from the Sheriff Department. As I start out my fourth year as the President of AFSCME 411, the local is in great shape financially, as you will see in the third State of the Union report in this issue. The Executive Board continues to make prudent and economic decisions to assure that your money is spent wisely. Hope you had fun at our first annual picnic. Let us know how you enjoyed it. We hope to make every year better. If you have any suggestions or comments for the next picnic, call the office at 465-5292. See you September 1st at the first Membership Meeting after summer.

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## First Ralph A. Liberato Labor Unity Picnic A Success

AFSCME 411 and 893's first annual labor unity picnic honoring a great labor icon was a big success. Everyone who attended the event had a great day of family fun. The event was well attended by Macomb County union workers county wide and their families. The canine unit of the Sheriff Department proved to be a big hit among both the children and the adults. The mounted unit was also in attendance, as well as the Marine Division. AFSCME Council 25 President Albert Garrett contributed AFSCME t-shirts to members who were in attendance. The

highlight of the day was a presentation of a plaque to the Liberato family honoring the founder of our local. In attendance was Liberato's three daughters, wife and many nieces, nephews as well as other family members. A special thank you to Cindy Donahue, Picnic Chair, Jan Wilson, Games Chair and all the other members who worked so hard for the many hours it took to organize this event. Thanks to our brothers at AFSCME 893 for all their assistance and all the brothers and sisters from unions countywide who assisted us with this endeavor.

## Local Officers Attend International Convention

President Donna Cangemi, Treasurer Karen Davenport and Executive Board Member Judi Reid attended the 36th International Convention in Anaheim, California from June 21-24th. One hundred and six resolutions and amendments were reviewed by the delegates. Highlights of resolutions that were approved by the delegates that will directly affect our membership includes an increase in International dues of fifty cents a month for full-time members, thirty-five cents a month for members who work from 12-20 hours and twenty-five cents for members who work less than twenty hours. The in-

crease will go into effect January 1, 2005 and will end June 30, 2006. Another resolution resulted in Michigan losing an International Vice President. Previously, Michigan had two International Vice Presidents based on the number of members in the state. That number has declined to the point where the state has lost one. Secretary Treasurer Larry Roehrig is no longer an International Vice President. President Al Garrett continues to hold that position. Guest speakers at the convention included President Bill Clinton, Presidential Candidate John Kerry and Jesse Jackson.

# The State of the Union – AFSCME 411 Yearly Report

**MEMBERSHIP** – Membership continues to grow. Currently, membership stands at 808. Last June, AFSCME had 725 dues-paying members. That’s an additional 83 members. There will be an additional 45 mental health members due to a long-awaited MERC decision and 5 new MSU Extension Educator II’s due to a successful election. There is also currently an election process in the Headstart Program where 45 teachers are voting whether or not they will become members of AFSCME 411. With the addition of the 49 members above, we have 858 members and, if we win the election in Headstart, 903. When I took office in June 2001, AFSCME 411 had 628 dues paying members. Our membership has now swelled by over 230.

**FINANCIAL** – Fiscally, we continue to move forward. The Executive Board and officers continue to show great responsibility with your membership dues income. The Executive Board voted to have a Certified Public Accountant audit all the records and review documents to assure the local is operating under all federal guidelines. The firm of Grimson and Grimson is currently in the process of doing this audit. The local has over \$15,000 in three accounts.

**GRIEVANCES** – The local continues to file grievances in all areas of the county and successfully resolved these with positive results for members. A internal training program has been implemented for new union stewards to better assist them to begin to process grievances.

**PEOPLE** – PEOPLE enrollment and involvement has increased since last year but continues to be a goal

## GOALS FOR NEXT YEAR

**CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS** – Successfully negotiate and ratify a contract

**INVOLVEMENT** – Increase involvement of membership at meetings and in the political process

**PICNIC** – Continue with annual picnic for 2005

**SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM** – Develop local scholarship program for AFSCME 411 members and their families

**SOLIDARITY** – Team work and solidarity with unions countywide

**PEOPLE** – Increase enrollment and involvement

## *Ralph Liberato – A Great Friend of Labor*

I am one of those who was lucky enough to have known the late County Commissioner Ralph Liberato. The county has suffered a great loss with the death of this long admired leader, but labor has suffered the worst blow. Ralph was a friend to all and always an inspiration to anyone around him. Thirty-nine years ago, Ralph and a few others started AFSCME Local 411. It began as a small local with a handful of county employees. Now, it is over 800 members strong representing employees from north to south. In Ralph’s final months, he continued to valiantly fight for working men and women, just as he had done his entire life. At

one of his last board meetings, he spearheaded a vigorous debate on behalf of mental health workers. It is with great sadness and loss that we say good-bye to a wonderful mentor and friend, Ralph Liberato. A famous quote says, “Leadership is not magnetic personality - that can just as well be a glib tongue. It is not making friends and influencing people - that is flattery. Leadership is lifting a person’s vision to higher sights, the raising of a person’s performance to a higher standard, the building of a personality beyond its normal limitations.” That is the lasting gift Ralph Liberato has given to so many of us and to immeasurable citizens of

**AFSCME Local 411** (586) 465-5292  
7 N. Main, Suite 208 (586) 321-2380  
Mt. Clemens, MI. 48043

President: Donna Cangemi  
Vice President: Joyce Compo  
Secretary: Jill Lezotte  
Treasurer: Karen Davenport



### Union Stewards

**Verkuillen, Emergency Services**  
Joyce Compo 469-5571 or 321-2380

**Sheriff**  
Jan Wilson 307-9563

**Downtown Mt. Clemens Offices**  
Jill Lezotte 469-5693

**Martha T Berry**  
Vicki Porchia, Nancy Hazel 469-5633

**Martha T Berry Dietary**  
Carolyn Platt 469-6351

**Facilities and Operations**  
Judith Reid (586) 242-4382 or 469-5244

**Health Department**  
469-5492

**Community Mental Health Clerical**  
Jennifer Jozwiak 469-5773

**Parks and Recreation, Pump Station**  
Kenneth Ahearn 772-3434