

THE 411 FORUM



A publication for the hardworking men and women of AFSCME 411

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THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Along with the recommendation for a dues increase inevitably comes the question, "Why should I pay union dues, I don't get anything in return." No one likes paying union dues. When I am asked this question, I always relate it to the frustration I feel every time I get my paycheck. "Why do I have to pay all these taxes, I don't get anything in return?" We all know the money we pay in taxes is for the betterment of all of society. Many services provided by our tax dollars are taken for granted, like roads to drive on and street lights. Similarly, the money you pay in dues provides benefits you may take for granted. The yearly raises all members of AFSCME 411 receive each January is due to the hard work of your dues money. An AFSCME 411 member making \$12.50 hourly in 1999 received a .40 hourly pay increase in 2000. This is a \$60 monthly wage increase. Over the life of our five-year contract, this AFSCME 411 member will receive a \$225 monthly increase in salary. Do you think management would be giving employees a 3.25% wage increase yearly and all the benefits you are currently receiving without union representation? We need to keep our union strong financially.

FOUR MOTIONS TO BE VOTED ON AT MARCH 6TH MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Four motions will be voted on by the membership at the March 6th meeting that will determine the new dues structure of the local. The four motions were proposed and approved by members attending the February membership meeting. The four motions are:

- 1) to increase dues to two hours pay with a cap of \$40
- 2) to increase dues by \$2 above minimum dues to \$27.45 at this time
- 3) to increase dues to \$27 which is a \$1.55 increase at this time
- 4) to increase dues to two hours pay with no cap

These four motions will be voted on at the March 6th membership meeting. The meeting will be in the cafeteria of the Verkuillen Building at 5:30 pm. Voting will be in compli-

ance with AFSCME International Rules for Elections. The AFSCME 411 Constitution indicates members must attend the meeting to vote. A detailed list of the local's monthly obligations and finances was distributed to all members who attended the February meeting. Following an open discussion and answer and question period the above motions were proposed and approved. At the January 16th and February 20th Executive Board meeting, the Executive Board recommended two hour dues with no cap.



Get Involved in Politics

This is a very important election year for the State of Michigan. Not only is a new governor going to be elected, but the Macomb County Board of Commissioners has been redistricted. This could have a big effect on who sits on the board next term. It is an important year for unions to be active

to elect government officials who will to represent our workers. The 2002 PEOPLE convention will be held the week-end of May 17th at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Dearborn. We need AFSCME 411 members to attend. If you are interested, please call the office at 465-5292.

Laws Created for Your Protection

What you don't know about Federal laws created to protect you on the job could cost you. The Workmen Compensation Act, the American With Disabilities Act and The Family and Medical Leave Act were created to help workers in times of need. Under the Family and Medical Leave Act, workers are entitled to the following rights and benefits:

- 12 weeks of unpaid FMLA leave in a 12 month period
- Continuation of group health benefits during FMLA leave
- Restoration to the same or an equivalent job upon return to work
- Retention of accrued benefits
- Protection from discrimination as a result of taking a FMLA leave.

Some stipulations about length of

employment and hours worked apply to this act. For more information on the Family and Medical Leave Act, you can go to www.elaws.com or call the union office and ask for a copy of the law. Under the Workmen Compensation Act, an employee who receives a personal injury arising out of and in the course of their employment will be paid compensation. In the case of their death, compensation is paid to their dependents. An employee who is going to or from his or her work or while on the premises where the employee's work is to be performed is presumed to be in the course of his or her employment. For more information, go to www.cis.state.mi.us/wkrcomp.com. The Americans With Disabilities Act enables workers with a disability

to seek reasonable accommodations that will enable them to perform essential job functions. If an employee is qualified to perform their essential job functions, the employer must make reasonable accommodations to assist the employee in performing these essential functions. For more information on the American with Disabilities Act, go to www.disability-management.net or write to Disability Rights Section, Civil Rights Division of the US Department of Justice, P.O. Box 66738, Washington, DC 20035-6738. If you have any questions about these laws or how they could effect you in the workplace, please call the union office at 465-5292. These laws were designed to protect. Be sure you know how they can!



411 STEWARD WINS PHOTO CONTEST

Jill Lezotte, a district steward for AFSCME 411 and an employee in the Prosecuting Attorneys office won first place in the county photo contest. Jills photo of her grandson dressed as a fireman carrying an American flag will be on the front of the counties annual report to Macomb County residents. Jill, who considers herself an amateur photographer, won the contest over some stiff competition. Jill and her grandson were presented their prize at the January Board of Commissioner's meeting by County Treasurer Carmella Sabaugh. Congratulations Jill on a job well