

# OPEIU LOCAL #9

## Newsletter



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### PLEASE NOTE MEETING LOCATION

**General Membership Meeting**  
**Tuesday, October 20, 2015**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**Milwaukee Professional Firefighters**  
**Local 215**  
**5625 W. Wisconsin Avenue**  
**Milwaukee, WI 53213**  
**(Enter through door in parking lot)**

### THE UNION STEWARD

If you are a steward, you are part of an extraordinary group, estimated to number more than 250,000 men and women in 53,000 local unions across the United States. Union stewards represent departments, shifts, and work sites. They monitor collective-bargaining agreements, advise employees on contract provisions, and represent employees in grievance proceedings.

As a Steward, you have two main jobs – first, building a strong union in your workplace; and, second, grievance handling. Like most vitally important jobs, that of a steward is very difficult. The roles of a steward can be best described as that of a negotiator, leader, educator, communicator, and organizer.

Know Your Contract. Your fellow workers don't expect you to know everything and they respect you a lot more if you don't try to bluff your way around things. But they do expect, as their leader, to be well informed. To know if the company is living up to the agreement, you must know what's in it. Unless you

know what it says, you cannot tell a worker if he/she is right about it. Read over every word of it. Discuss it with your union officers.

Know Your Rights. You are managements equal in all matters relating to the contract and the union-employer relationship. The contract may outline some of your rights as a steward but much of it has a legal basis. If you are denied rights which make your defense of a member impossible, make sure your local is aware of the situation.

You are a representative of your union to your members. Introduce yourself and greet new hires. Be the strongest advocate for the union on the property. Pass along information from your union official. Squelch and don't be part of rumors or gossip. Work together with your union officers.

### Some Goals of a Union Steward:

1. Keep yourself informed on union affairs.
2. Serve as an example to your members.
3. Act as a leader – do not let personal likes or dislikes prejudice your actions as a Steward.
4. Keep your workers informed on sources of information.
5. Do not promise if you cannot deliver.
6. Investigate every grievance as if it were your own.
7. If not sure of an issue, ask your union representative and always work with your union not against them.

### Stewards Don't Make These Mistakes:

1. Walk around the workplace with a chip on your shoulder.
2. Pretend to know all the answers to all the problems.
3. Give out false information or spread rumors
4. Violate company rules.

5. Violate the contract.
6. Present a grievance that isn't one.
7. Blow up (yell and scream) when dealing with supervisors or members.
8. Use profane language.
9. Making side agreements with management.

Remember a Steward is a valuable asset to the unions in the work place. A good working relationship between the union and the stewards on the work site is a must to be able to achieve the best agreement for the members working for that employer.

### **LABOR HISTORY ESSAY CONTEST**

The Wisconsin Labor History Society announces its High School Essay Contest for the 2015-2016 School Year.

Students are urged to interview family members, neighbors, friends or others for their stories about work and unions.

First Prize: \$500.00

Second Prize: \$300.00

Third Prize: \$200.00

For more information visit website

[www.wisconsinlaborhistory.org](http://www.wisconsinlaborhistory.org)

### **ADDRESS CHANGES**

When newsletters or other materials are mailed out to members the Union always receives back a handful of wrong addresses. Please contact the Union if you are moving or have a name change so that our records are up-to-date.

**As always, if you have any concerns or issues please call or email the office.**

### **MEMBERS RECEIVING PINS**

Pictured below are a few members receiving their 30 and 35 year pins from President Johnson at the September membership meeting.



President Johnson and Marilyn Purdy



President Johnson and Mary Beth Gannon



Kathleen Wood and President Johnson