



# OPEIU LOCAL #9 Newsletter



For Bulletin Board Posting

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## PLEASE NOTE MEETING LOCATION

**General Membership Meeting  
Tuesday, January 19, 2010  
6:00 p.m.**

**Iron Workers Local 8**

**12034 West Adler Lane  
Milwaukee, WI**

## Local 9 T-Shirts

The Local 9 office is in the process of mailing the new logo t-shirts to each steward for distribution to the membership. If yours has not arrived please be patient, it will soon be on its way. If you did not order a t-shirt, please call the office so we can compile a list of those still in need of a shirt. Also, if you did not order a t-shirt because of the limited sizes we had available please contact the office as we have been able to expand the list of available sizes.

## Changes to Local 9 Constitution & By-laws Proposed

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee of the Local has put together a proposal to update Local 9's Constitution & Bylaws. There will be reading of the changes at the January Membership meeting. In order to view the current Constitution & Bylaws please visit our website at [www.opeiu9.org](http://www.opeiu9.org). The proposal will be read a second time at the February 16, 2010 Membership meeting and voted on at that time also.

None of this can happen unless there is a quorum of at least 12 people present for these meetings.

*Lori Schmidt, Chair*

*Constitution & Bylaws Committee*

## Senate Passes Health Care Bill

On December 24<sup>th</sup> the US Senate passed health care reform by a margin of 60-39. While passage of this legislation continues the momentum for health care insurance reform, the Senate bill itself does not live up to the kind of reform we need.

The bill has many positive features but it falls short in three key areas: it is paid for by a tax on working families health benefits, it fails to provide a public health insurance option which would control costs by giving insurance companies real competition and it does not do enough to make sure employers are living up to their responsibility.

The bill does make some important improvements. It would cover 30 million more people, providing subsidies to lower and middle income people to help them pay for health coverage. It also sets necessary regulations on insurance companies to prevent some of their worst practices. It creates important reforms to our medical system, provides relief to early retirees and begins to close the "donut hole" in Medicare prescription coverage.

The US House bill that was passed was far better on the critical points like funding, employer responsibility and a public option.

House and Senate leaders must now come together and craft a combined bill that each side will need to vote on once more. The process of creating this combined bill is a vital opportunity for real health care insurance reform, and we must let our members of Congress know what real reform means to us.

## **Attention WI High School Students: A Unique Essay Contest**

The Wisconsin Labor History Society announces its High School Essay Contest for the 2009-2010 School Year. Wisconsin high school students (grades 9-12) are eligible to participate.

Cash prizes are available for essays of about 750 words on the topic: "Unions have been important to my family and my community because. . ." Essays will be judged on understanding, evidence of original research, writing style and significance. Essays must be typed, double-spaced, on white paper. Two copies must be submitted (one may be a photocopy). The following information must accompany the essay: name, address, home telephone number, grade in school, name and address of school, and if you were encouraged or assisted by a teacher, the name of the teacher, and list your family's union membership, if applicable. The completed essay is to be mailed to Prof. Harvey J. Kaye, Center for History and Social Change, University of WI-Green bay, Green Bay, WI 54311. Submissions must be postmarked no later than February 15, 2010.

Teachers are urged to assist students in editorial and research advice for the essays. Students are also encouraged to talk with family members, friends or neighbors about what labor union membership has meant to them, or what struggles they have faced in their jobs. Members are urged to suggest this contest to any high-school age children they know and to also tell them about what the union has meant to them.

## **Labor History Makes History in WI**

For nearly 20 years unionists in Wisconsin have been trying to make the teaching of labor history in schools a reality.

Finally, a state law which would make this happen was passed by both the State Senate and the State Assembly and has been signed by Governor Doyle. The bill calls for the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to include the history of organized labor and the collective bargaining process in the state's model academic standards of the schools.

It is only fitting that this legislation be enacted in WI since WI has such a strong history of legislation on behalf of working men and women. In 1911 WI passed the first Workers Compensation bill in the country; in 1932 WIU again led the way when it passed the first Unemployment Insurance and then, more recently, WI was one of the first states to pass a Family and Medical Leave Law that eventually led to a federal Family and Medical Leave Act being passed by Congress in 1993.

These are but a few examples of the rich history of labor that our children should know about, and now, as a result of this legislation, will be taught.

## **A Fitting Quote from Martin Luther King, Jr.**

"History is a great teacher. Now everyone knows that the labor movement did not diminish the strength of the nation but enlarged it. By raising the living standards of millions, labor miraculously created a market for industry and lifted the whole nation to undreamed of levels of production. Those who attach labor forget these simple truths, but history remembers them."

## **Chicago Federation of Labor Scholarships**

The Chicago Federation of Labor will offer five academic-based scholarships and five random – drawing scholarships in the amount of \$2,000 to students graduating from a Chicago or suburban high school. Students may apply in only one of the two categories. The period for submitting applications is January 1 through March 1. Please see the application for complete instructions online at [www.chicagolabor.org](http://www.chicagolabor.org).

## **Steward Training**

Local 9 is considering having a Steward Training Seminar at a convenient location in Wisconsin and Illinois on a Saturday in March. If you are interested, please contact the Local 9 office.

***As always if you have any problems do not hesitate to call or email the office.***

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