

# OPEIU LOCAL #9

## Newsletter



**Candy Johnson, President - [local9candy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:local9candy@sbcglobal.net)**

**For Bulletin Board Posting OCTOBER 2011**

**Dawn Martin, Business Manager - [local9dawn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:local9dawn@sbcglobal.net) 414-771-9730, FAX: 414-771-9732  
1-800-870-9499**

### PLEASE NOTE MEETING LOCATION

**General Membership Meeting  
Tuesday, October 18, 2011  
6:00 p.m.  
WI AFL-CIO Building  
6333 W. Bluemound Road  
Milwaukee, WI 53213**

**November meeting is at 5:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> in Illinois  
Site to be determined**

**NO DECEMBER  
MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

### **Last Chance to Sign Up for Training Class**

Local 9 is offering a training class entitled "Taking Back Your Workplace" on Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The class will focus on what it takes to get members involved and help take back the workplace from management. This workshop explores the concepts and methods of building meaningful participation as members of the Union. The training is being held at the Welcome Center located at 4001 S. 68<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee (the low building attached to the church at the corner of 68<sup>th</sup> & Forest Home Avenue). There is no cost for Local 9 members, lunch will be provided and there will be mileage reimbursement. Please use the insert to sign up and join us.

### **Congratulations to Two Local 9 Members**

Recently Lisa Galloway, a Local 9 member employed at Benefit Plan Administration, was awarded a Union SAFE College Savings Grant from Union Plus. Congratulations Lisa! Anyone interested in more information on educational services available through Union Plus should go to their website at [www.UnionPlus.org/Education](http://www.UnionPlus.org/Education).

Congratulations also to Judith Cummings, a Local 9 member at B/P, who received a renewal of her John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship. Anyone interested in applying for this scholarship should go to the International's website at [www.opeiu.org](http://www.opeiu.org).

### **VOTE Fund Support**

It has become increasingly evident that unions must step up their political activity in order to protect the rights and standards of living of their members. Accordingly, the delegates at the June 2010 International Convention voted to amend the OPEIU constitution to include language to help Local Unions further the work of the J.B. Moss Voice of the Electorate (VOTE) fund. Locals are to pursue contract language for payroll deduction for the VOTE fund. Additionally, those individuals who do not have access to payroll deduction for the VOTE fund may go to the International's website for information on how to make their own direct contributions to the Fund.

### **This is the Price of Buyer's Remorse**

Buyer's remorse. That is what some people have called the recall election process. While one can agree with them, we must also recognize something good has also begun.

The 2010 election saw a full 50% of the electorate sit on their hands and do nothing. Among those who did vote, one has to wonder just how much effort was put into understanding the issues, the proposed solutions and the historical performance of the candidates. By acting like sheep instead of a committed electorate, we have set the stage for this governance remediation.

Edward R. Murrow said: "A nation of sheep begets a government of wolves." Call the Department of Natural Resources because it is time to thin the herd.

There are cries about how the recalls hurt the economy and cost taxpayers. True and true. Guess what? We asked for it. Get out the checkbook because we have no one else to blame. This is the price of apathy. Just thank God that we still have the remedy of the recall to try to stop the runaway freight train of madness in Madison (note that there is now an attempt to drastically reduce the right of recall elections going on in Madison).

We know that these recalls are rooted in policy, not personality, which some tried to lead us to believe. The Republicans got elected promising jobs and have pulled a fast one on all of us. Behind the foible of "budget" they used the issue to drive home every bit of longed for right-wing goodies.

The elaborate structure of campaign donors and backroom deals will not be altered without a fight—certainly not without the mechanism of the recall. The maze of campaign cash and the resulting quid pro quo legislation has left a bad taste in many mouths.

What we have is a complete misunderstanding of the difference between being involved and being committed. Not voting is not an option, and just voting is not enough. Being committed means spending the time and doing the homework on the issues—not abdicating our thinking to the politicians whose language is designed not to illuminate but to distract; not to educate but to create "the fog" of political war.

The difference between involvement and commitment should be thought of simply as a bacon and egg breakfast. Think about it. The chicken was

involved with the breakfast but the pig was committed to it. You don't want recall elections? Get it right in the first place. Get committed.

Frederick Douglas said it best: "If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation . . . want crops without plowing up the ground; they want rain without thunder and lightning. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did, and it never will."

We must demand. We must be committed.

## **Unions Energize**

The latest attacks on labor have actually energized workers to fight for their unions research is showing.

People are becoming mobilized and are thinking more and more about what unions do. American unions are reaching a tipping point and workers are finding out what is worth fighting for.

The whole collective bargaining process is based upon the premise that there's always going to be conflict between workers and management when it comes to important issues like wages. Workers want some sort of representation to voice their needs and perspective, which are often counter to management's position.

Even if a union is not present in the workplace, the very threat of a union is a motivating factor to get management to listen to the needs of workers. The mere presence of unions' forces nonunionized companies to introduce competitive benefits so they can attract workers from the same labor pool.

Fewer checks and balances will hold employers accountable if labor unions like those under fire across the country are weakened. In many countries, labor unions are the only institutions that look out for the basic human rights of workers and provide many with the only political voice with which to be heard. Speak up!

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

/gb opeiu #9, afl-cio-clc