

OPEIU LOCAL #9

Newsletter

For Bulletin Board Posting

MAY 2010

Candy Johnson, President - local9candy@sbcglobal.net

Dawn Martin, Business Manager - local9dawn@sbcglobal.net

414--771-9730, 1-800-870-9499, FAX: 414--771-9732

PLEASE NOTE MEETING LOCATION

**General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, May 18, 2010
5:00 p.m.**

**Chicago District Carpenters
12 East Erie Street
Chicago, IL**

Delegates elected to the OPEIU International Convention

Delegates to the OPEIU International convention were elected at the April 20th general membership meeting. The members elected were Candy Johnson, Pat Diamond, Jackie Podjaski, Ann Minor, and Beth Miszewski.

8 Ways to Cut Your Health Care Costs

Even though a national health package was enacted the nation's health care system remains a national priority. Serious reform and belt tightening must happen but individual responsibility and action can both set an example for Washington and make a contribution. Here are 8 suggestions for helping curb unnecessary health care expenses.

1. **Develop a good, working relationship with your primary care physician.** A primary care doctor who knows you, your medical history and your circumstances stands a better chance than a relative stranger when making decisions and giving you advice that will keep you healthy, out of the hospital and in no need of specialized medical care.
2. **Use good judgment and use emergency care only for emergencies.** Often it is critically important to get medical care immediately. If you are in doubt as to the severity of the problem call for help. If there is a problem but you are not certain how critical it is, call your doctor or his service and try to get some advice over the phone—or perhaps, in person. They can help you access the level of need/care you have.
3. **Get-and stick-with the program.** Most Americans health care these days is devoted to treating chronic conditions—arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease. Taking medication as prescribed, getting regular checkups and adhering to lifestyle changes can keep these diseases under control at relatively modest costs. Also, discuss your medications with your doctor to be sure they are doing what they are prescribed for. It may be time to

reconsider what medications you are on.

4. **Check with your primary doctor first.** Medical care is increasingly specialized, but as much as possible; you should let your primary care physician coordinate that care. Failure to do so can lead to wasteful over testing and duplication of treatments.
5. **Ignore the drug ads.** New drugs may have real advantages over older ones, but the virtues of the old standbys which don't have big ad budgets behind them often get overlooked. Older drugs are frequently just as effective and safer and generally cheaper.
6. **Go generic.** Most insurers have higher co-pays for brand-name drugs, so using generic medications can mean a cost saving for both you and for the health care system.
7. **Question the need for expensive tests.** Don't push to get new, expensive tests just because you think new is better. Ask why an expensive test is necessary and how it will make a difference.
8. **Stay healthy.** Not needing health care is perhaps the surest way of spending less money on it, both yours and society's. So, don't smoke, eat a good diet and exercise

Senate. How this will "shake out" is hard to say at this time.

One stunning change in the political landscape will be the loss of Congressman David Obey (D-WI). Late last week Rep. Obey announced his decision to retire after 41 years in Congress. During those 41 years Rep. Obey developed a reputation as a fighter, the type of politician who called it like he saw it and did not shy away from conflict.

Rep. Obey has been on the House Appropriations Committee for much of his tenure and became Chair in 2007. He had tremendous influence over the expenditures of the Congress. His departure, at the very least, diminishes Wisconsin's clout.

It is important to note that Obey's orientation was toward the working people of his district, Wisconsin and the nation as a whole. Over the years, in many of his conversations, he always said that whatever he did, he wanted to come out on the side of the hard-working men and women who were being screwed by the fat cats. In that sense, he was a populist of the classic kind.

We do not know what Rep. Obey will do after he leaves next January; but no doubt, he will continue his legacy in that whatever he does, it will be something useful.

Thank you Congressman Obey for your dedication to the workers of this nation.

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

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What's Ahead in the Fall Elections

No one can predict what will happen in the elections this Fall, but this much is certain, there will be dramatic changes on Capitol Hill.

There are a number of familiar faces that will be retiring from both the House and the