

AFSCME LOCAL 1668

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November 2012

President's Report

Hello again sisters and brothers! I hope this month finds you all well. The weather sure is changing fast, the fall colors are gone, and we had our first snow! Seems like summer just started!

Thanksgiving is upon us, and that is when we take time to think of the things in our lives that we appreciate. I hope all of you have many such things. We should all be thankful that we live in such a great country, where we can pursue our individual dreams. We also need to be thankful that we have good jobs working for a good employer, and we have such a great union family! I know I am thankful for the solidarity that our union brings to us each day on the job. Each and every member of AFSCME Local 1668 plays a vital role in the success of our great local. Together, we are successful. Together, we insure that we will continue to be one of the most important aspects in the success of WMU. The things we all do make every part of our student's college experience

more comfortable, more conducive to learning, and more memorable. We have an impact in the areas that the students live, learn, eat and play. No other group can say that, we are as important to the day to day operations of WMU as any other group on campus. We all do our part in making WMU work, and WMU works because we do! Thank you AFSCME Local 1668, for all you do!

We should also be thankful for the things our union provides that make our lives better, and makes it easier for us to provide the great services that we do. Fair wages, working conditions and benefits! If it wasn't for our union, we would not enjoy the level of these things that we do. Over the last 50 years, our members have stood together, as one, and bargained fairly for the things we enjoy today. Not only here at WMU, but across the country. Many people fought, and died, for the rights that we currently have, and I for one give thanks for that. All workers, not just union members, enjoy the eight our day, forty hour week, paid vacation, paid sick time, paid holidays, overtime pay, just

to name a small number of examples. They enjoy these because of the efforts of decades of commitment and solidarity of unions and their members. Thank you AFSCME! And thank you to all organized labor!

The Kalamazoo Holiday parade was held recently. Your Local was represented in the parade, and marched to tell our community "Happy Holidays"! Thanks to all of you that took time to come down and put forth such a positive impression of our local! It sure was a great public relations opportunity! The streets were lined, thanks to the great weather, and thousands of people got to see that AFSCME Local 1668 is part of our community. We proudly carried our banner before us and greeted the crowd with smiles, waves, and holiday wishes!

I hope everyone has many things to be thankful for this year! Have a safe and blessed Thanksgiving holiday. And to you hunters out there, be safe and good luck.

In solidarity,

Dennis

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Union Meetings are every first Thursday of the month Next meeting will be **November 1st 2012 at 4:00 p.m.**

E-board meetings are every third Thursday of the month next meeting will be **November 15th 2012 at 4:00 p.m.**



The Newsletter can be found online at:
www.afscme1668.org and
[facebook.com/afscme1668](https://www.facebook.com/afscme1668)

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Vice President's Report

Hello Brothers and Sisters

Can you believe it? Thanksgiving already. . I hope everyone will have a wonderful Thanksgiving and I hope all the hunters out there have a great and prosperous hunting season.

On the back of this news letter we have

Thanks to you who voted this past election. I am proud to say that 65,000 AFSCME

members helped make this election possible from the Presidency down to the important proposals. Though we didn't get all we wanted but we did get some. So whether you knocked on doors, did phone banking rallied or put out signs in your yard you were a great help. I just want to say to the members in this local thank you for all your hard work in helping our local politicians out.

And stepping up for Council 25

and our own Brother Bill Farmer. That was the closest race I have seen in a long time (probably ever in Calhoun county).

Just want everyone to know our Union dues will be going up in 2013. It will be \$.30 per month

Grievance Up-Dates

Arbitration Committee: There was five grievances filed for 3rd step.

Committee Up-Dates

Sieta Committee: on the back of the newsletter is an article for Winter closure Donations Please call Bryan Sutton if you have any questions, comments, and concerns his number is 269-873-0249.

Women Committee:

The State-wide Women's Committee will not be meeting this month. However their next meeting is scheduled for February 2013.

The Holiday Parade Report

The Holiday Parade was a great success thanks to the members who showed up to participate. This was a great public relations opportunity for our local, and we were represented well by those in attendance. It was great to see people in the crowd cheering for us and waving. Our members were cheering and full of smiles. Our banners were carried with pride.

Thanks for coming.

In Solidarity

Audy Conner, Sergeant at arms

Chief Stewards' Report

Greetings and Happy Thanksgiving to you all. I hope that you are able to spend some time enjoying what's left of the nice weather before the snow starts falling for real. We all so much to be thankful for and I for one will be taking some time to reflect on those.

We have had some interesting activities around campus as of late. There are major plans to demolish Hoekje and Bigelow Halls. The University intends to build a new "Freshman" Dorm in its place. This dorm promises to be everything that the incoming students want and look for. They are also planning to build a new Dining facility somewhere near the Goldsworth Valley Pond. This building will be a stand-alone facility that will be "the place to be" in the Valleys for the student to hang out and more importantly, to eat! They intend this to be like the Bistro but on a much larger scale. They have committed to this leadership that they intend to staff this facility with our Dining Employees. Of Course the Maintenance and Landscaping will be done by our folks as well. Unfortunately, they would not commit to Custodial. This is still in the early planning stages and Dining Services is holding meetings with our

Dining Staff to keep them informed on the happenings in this regard. We will keep you all informed of the developments as we are made aware.

The University has established a new "Health and Wellness Committee" and Dennis and I were asked to be a part of this. The new Associate Vice President of Human Resources wants to revamp the existing program and they are encouraging all of the employee groups from across campus to participate in how we move forward. We have had only one meeting so there is not much to say at this point. Of course, when there is information to be shared, we will let you know. This came from conversations that were had at the bargaining table over the summer when we were discussing Health Care and we stated that we wanted to be able to give the employees from across campus, a voice in these discussions that impact how decisions are made at the Top levels at the University. Obviously, this is in the early planning stages and we will keep you informed.

We got one 3rd step answer back about students performing bargaining unit work, denied. We heard two 3rd steps last week and have four more

to hear as of this moment, with two more being filed tomorrow.

After all the elections results are in, we were not successful on Proposal 2, which was to protect collective bargaining rights. Now more than ever, we need to stand together in a united front. I know you all remember the slogan, "UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL!" We need to remember that practice that saying! We all need to come together now, so when more attacks come our way, we can all stand together and work together and make sure everyone knows that we are UNITED!
In Unity,
Kathi Babbitt

Winter Break Meal Donations

- Hello Seita Scholars Volunteers and Mentors!

We hope that you are all having a wonderful fall season! We wanted to take a moment to reach out to you with an upcoming program need, which many of you may have seen detailed in the recent Volunteer/Mentor Newsletter -- the need for meal donations during the WMU Winter Closure in December.

Winter Closure is a three week period during which Western Michigan University is closed following the 16 week fall academic term. During Winter Closure, the University's dining halls close, meaning that those student staying on campus are responsible to provide their own meals. The Seita Scholars Program, with support from our volunteers, provides our Scholars with one hot meal per day.

We know that the holiday season is very busy, so we wanted to let you know that there are many ways to help in this endeavor. Some of those ways are as follows:

Provide one home cooked meal that is freezable and will feed 15-20 people;

- Provide gift cards to an area restaurant that will deliver food for 15-20 people;
- Set up a food delivery for a specific day (i.e. Ample Pantry); or
- Purchase and donate family style frozen meals.

If you are interested in providing a meal during this time, please email Maria Newhouse (maria.r.newhouse@wmich.edu) to sign up for a specific date. Thank you in advance for all of your support!

Sincerely,

Maria Newhouse, MSW
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