

# President's Report

## "the attacks on unions and the middle class haven't stopped."



Hello again AFSCME Local 1668! Here it is October already. The weather is getting colder and the leaves are falling, as I'm sure our Landscape brothers and sisters know. Speaking of Landscape, I would like to give kudos to our members in that department. While most of us are working in our warm, dry buildings, these folks are out there every day, in this less than desirable weather, working hard to keep the campus looking great. Rain or shine, warm or cold, the leaves are falling. They don't wait for a nice day, and neither do our Landscape crews. So hats off to you, Landscape Services! Thanks for all of your hard work and dedication that is yet another example of why "We Make WMU Happen!"

The next meeting of the Council 25 College and University Coordination Committee (CUCC) is being held in Big Rapids, on the campus of Ferris State University. This committee meets three times a year for the purpose of sharing information among the AFSCME locals from all the different state universities. CUCC is one of the most solid and productive commit-

tees within Council 25. It has a long history of success in keeping all the AFSCME members across the state up to date and educated on current events and trends at the various universities. It is very informative to network with folks from other universities because quite often what happens to one will happen to all, eventually. We keep each other informed on negotiations, policies, and anything else going on that could help fight the good fight. If you would be interested in attending a CUCC meeting, let me know. It is a great chance to meet new people who work in a similar environment as we do, and learn the differences as well as the similarities of other universities in our state. If you are considering becoming active in your union, CUCC can be a wonderful starting point. It can show you that we are not alone here at WMU; we have brothers and sisters all across the state that are ready, willing, and able to lend a hand when we need it. It is always nice to see some new faces at a CUCC meeting, so if you want to learn more, please come to a membership meeting, or contact me in the office and I would be happy to talk with you more about it.

In case you don't know, the at-

tacks on unions and the middle class haven't stopped. Last time I checked the AFL-CIO website, there were approximately 70 individual pieces of legislation that are directly aimed at us! You won't hear about them on the news, or the radio, and you can hardly find anything in the newspaper. That is why I encourage you to go to the AFL-CIO website and see for yourself. It is simple, just go to [www.miaflcio.org](http://www.miaflcio.org) and you will see a toolbar across the top of the page. Move to Legislative, and then click on legislative update in the drop down menu. This is a great tool to keep yourself up to date on the coordinated attack on our way of life. They do a great job of updating this page, so check back often because it changes almost daily. There are also tools there to help you have your voice heard if you so desire, by helping you write a letter to the editor or to your legislator. I encourage everyone to check it out. We really need to keep up on this stuff, because we are the ones who are going to pay if we don't! Come to the union meetings to find out more on how you can help defend your union, the middle class, and democracy! WE meet every month on the first Thursday at 4pm. See you there! In solidarity,

Dennis



[www.afscme1668.org](http://www.afscme1668.org) and  
[facebook.com/afscme1668](https://www.facebook.com/afscme1668)

Thought for the Month:  
What image are you making  
and what message are you  
sending?

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## Vice President's Report

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Hello Everyone

Its fall and Michigan weather out there so please dress appropriately, we wouldn't want anyone getting sick. Speaking of sick, don't forget to get your flu shot this year; it's a great benefit we get for free, on the clock and a good snack at the end.

If you haven't already figured out, we had two newsletters in the same month. I apologize for that, I will try to make sure the newsletters come out in the same month they're suppose to come out. I would also like some feedback on the changes I made on the newsletter, if you have



any.

I am proud to say we had several new members show up at the last few membership meeting. Those who brought their coupon got a free local t-shirt, and met their officers. On

behalf of our officers, thanks for coming and please continue to come we enjoyed your presence.

The parade is still on the information is on the back we have an incentive for people who will be participating in the parade. So if you are not doing anything on Saturday November 12<sup>th</sup> come join the fun.

In solidarity

Val Armstrong VP

## Grievance Up-Date

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- Healthcare Benefits
- Four termination: two were denied; one on last chance; and one possible return.
- Upgrades to m4 project specialist (training period) which was remanded back to 2nd step.
- **Time clocks...WE MUST BE MORE ATTENTIVE!** We heard at third and awaiting answer
- Holiday scheduling in DS denied.
- Working on several grievances including some subcontracting and the Master Gardeners.



## Committee Up-Dates

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**Arbitration Committee-** Reports that only one grievance to vote on in Dining , and decided to send it to Arbitration.

**Women's Committee-** the women's committee was held on October 8th at the Hyatt long with the convention. The committee held elections for the region co-chairs and our own Judy Slumkoski was renamed region 7's co-chair. Congratulations Judy. If anyone is interested in going to a women's committee meeting please contact Judy Slumkoski.

# Chief Steward's Report

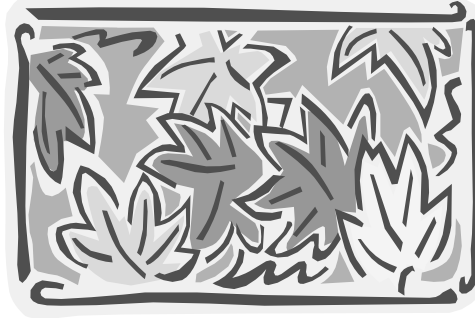
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## Chief Steward Report

Happy Halloween! Hope all is going well with you all. I can't believe how fast this year is going by. We are rapidly approaching the Holiday Season. I know that Landscape Services is getting ready for the snow removal. Skilled Trades is preparing buildings for the cold season as well. Everyone one else is just doing what they do best! Making it Happen for WMU.

We have several grievances that we discussed possible settlements for; including several cases that are waiting Council 25 Arbitration Consideration. We are still waiting to see the agreements in writing so I cannot report on these yet.

We have had a long battled over the "Timeclock" issues on campus. WE must be more careful about watching the clock when we punch in and out. DO NOT let someone else punch in behind you without your punch activity being cleared from the screen. DO NOT punch in if someone else's activity is still on the screen. IF the clock says anything out of the ordinary, such as your name, and whether your punch was accepted, BE SURE you try again! IF trying again does not work, then immediately make sure your supervisor is aware and then DOCUMENT the problem yourself! These processes may take a bit longer so get to work early enough to make sure you have time to punch in. These new clocks are different and if you swipe too fast, it may not register. While I FIRMLY believes that it is the clocks that are the problem, we can be more proactive in making sure that we are careful about what is going on with these clocks when we are using them. No swipe reprimands used to be unheard of. That is



no longer the case so be extra careful.

Valerie, Bryan, Willie and I went to the Council 25 Convention earlier this month, and along the way we went to a Higher Education Conference put on by the MEA. This conference was extremely well presented. We were educated on the University Budget Process, we learned about the Mackinaw Center and who funds them, what they stand for. In case you didn't already know, they are ALL about funding extreme Conservative groups and then making sure those people are carrying out the agendas that they represent. They are huge proponents for Privatization. Especially the Public Employee ( yes, that's you.) We also learned about freedom of speech for Union Officials and how this affects our ability to represent our members. What is appropriate and when it is appropriate to use the freedom of speech. When you are protected and when we are not. This conference was very informative and I hope we are invited to attend again. BY the way, we were the only non-MEA attendees, but we are all in the same

boat, as University employees.

Did you know? All preventative care Doctor visits are covered 100% with NO deductible and NO Co-pay. So when you go have those annual Health Maintenance exams, Well baby visits, Mammograms, Prostate Screenings, Colonoscopies and all associated Lab procedures, (all once per year, for preventative screenings) they are covered 100%, no out of pocket money for IN Network visits. I strongly encourage you all to go to the [www.BCBSM.com](http://www.BCBSM.com) and register your BSBCM account number and check out what your coverage is before you have to use them. They have a very detailed description of what is and what is not covered, which can be printed for your records. IF you cannot go to the website, call the number on the back of your Insurance card and ask them what is covered before you go, if possible. It is better to be informed before you go. You can also look at the chart that was given out at our last Ratification meeting in Late 2009 that shows what was negotiated to make sure you are being told the correct thing, if something doesn't sound right, or look right, then get with your steward so we can address it. We are aware of the problems with Mental Health Care charges and Orthotics for your shoes, and we are working to solve these issues. We should have an answer by the next newsletter.

In Solidarity,  
Kathi Babbitt



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Thank you to all our members who helped make this years United Way Campaign a success. Every penny counts towards our fundraising goals! Thank you to the Community Services Team for your efforts to make this years campaign a success as well. Your Team this year was Tory Kennedy, Louise Ollie, Carol Case, Juanita Snell and Kathi Babbitt. Thank you again for your efforts.

The Annual Terry Kelly Memorial Food Drive will be kicking off shortly so look for collection boxes at your timeclocks and shops.

The AFSCME Dining Service Employees are holding a coat drive again this year. If you have some clean gently used cold weather coats and the like that you would like to donate, please bring them to any Dining Services facility as soon as possible. The collection boxes will be available through Oct 27, 2011 and will be donated to Salvation Army.

## ***Celebrating the 50th Annual Kalamazoo Holiday Parade***

### **WE NEED YOU.....WE WANT YOU!!!!!!!**

AFSCME local 1668 is participating in this years Kalamazoo Holiday Parade again, and WE NEED YOU!!!!!! The Parade is on November 12, 2011.

We would like people to come out and be in the parade (have family?) no problem bring them with you let the community see who AFSCME Local 1668 is and what we are about.

There will be walking and waving, and holding the brand new banner we just got....we **might** even have things to throw to the crowd.

For those who will be walking in the parade will be getting AFSCME sweatshirt to wear, and will be throwing candy to the crowd.

In solidarity,

Earl (Audi) Conner

Sergeant-at-arm/ECC Chairman

**PAYCHECKS**

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**PAYCHECKS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

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As per Public Act 323 of 2010, in the State of Michigan, the Employer has mandated that all Employees, who are now receiving their pay, via a paper check, will be required to select between direct deposit or a Visa Payroll Card no later than November 28th . Those who do not select one or the other will automatically be enrolled in the Visa Payroll Card program.

There are many associated fees that come with the Visa Card so it extremely important that you educate yourself on the fees. We are requesting that the employer send a mailing to your home ASAP that explains what they are requiring and what the fees are that come with the Visa Card. If you can, make sure you go to the website [www.wmich.edu/payroll](http://www.wmich.edu/payroll) and look under the Payroll Choices link, to get the full information on what exactly the Visa Payroll Card does, and if this is what you want. It is our understanding that there many, per use charges. Charges for lost or stolen cards, etc. You can go to the Employee Self Serve in GoWMU to make any changes you want anytime you want.