

# AFSCME LOCAL 1668

Volume 9 issue 9

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**Special points of interest:**

- Make a Difference award Winner
- Day of Caring Project
- United Way
- Up-Dates and Reports

**Inside this issue:**

Vice President's Report	2
Grievance Up-Dates	2
Committee Up-Dates	2
Chief Stewards' Report	3
Opportunities!	3
Did you Know?	4
Ready to Celebrate?	4

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## President's Report

Hello AFSCME! Sure feels like fall out there, as I write this it is only about 55 degrees outside. It won't be long and our Landscape folks will be busy with leaves. Sure seems like summer just started. The good thing about it being almost over is that our Dining Services workers are back with us. Nice to have you all back!

Kathi Cain-Babbitt, Bryan Sutton and I manned our tent at Bronco Bash a few days ago. Sure was nice to see so many students milling around Miller Plaza. We passed out ink pens and bottle opener key chains with our logo that you approved purchasing. We also collected quite a few signatures on the PA 4 petition drive. Most importantly, though, we got our name out there to a lot of students. It was really nice having the opportunity to talk to some students and explain to them who AFSCME Local 1668 is. I think it was a really good idea doing this event, and I thank you for approving it. There is no such thing as too much publicity in these times, and this event gave us the opportunity to welcome the students with a smile, give them a little token to remember us by, and let them know that Western works because we do. We also used the banner you

approved purchasing, which helped a lot as well. The banner brought in more than one person just so they could ask "what is AFSCME?" It was nice to have them ask, and even nicer to explain, and to let them know just how much we do to make their experience at WMU better.

This month marked the tenth anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001. We should all take a moment to reflect on where we were that day, and to remember the thousands of people we lost that day. I know this has been all over the news lately, and many of you are probably tired of hearing about it. But we must never forget. We must never forget because we as Americans had our lives forever changed that day. We as AFSCME members should never forget because we lost fellow union members on that day. Three AFSCME members gave their lives that day in the rescue effort. Five more AFSCME members were killed in their offices at the State Department of Taxation and Finance at the World Trade Center. Other AFSCME members who were first responders have died since that day, of illnesses that may be linked to their work at Ground Zero. Let's never forget the innocent employees and brave first responders that

were our union brothers and sisters that were lost that day.

Finally, I would like to congratulate our Chief Steward, Kathi Cain-Babbitt on being the most recent AFSCME member to win the WMU Make a Difference award. Sister Cain-Babbitt is a great example of what AFSCME brings to not only WMU, but to our community. Her efforts in our union, the Greater Kalamazoo United Way, the South Central AFL-CIO, and other things show that we are not just workers at WMU; we are members of our community. We care about our community, and we do many things on a daily basis to make our community a better place for all. Although Sister Cain-Babbitt is getting recognition for her efforts, and she deserves it, she is just one of many of our members that make me proud to be in AFSCME. Thank you Kathi, and thank you too all of you for making WMU, our communities, and AFSCME better!

In solidarity,  
 Dennis

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



# Vice President's Report

Hello Brothers and Sister

We still have a boat load of T-Shirts available at the Union Hall, just let a Divisional know, and they can help you get in touch with the right people. If you are in custodial you can get a hold of me I have some in my car. They are \$9 dollars so get in the AFSCME spirit and buy a T-shirt today.

Our Union is one of the most charitable unions I know. We have several charities someone in our union is involved in. We have several "day of caring" dates we attend. If you have a charity you would like people to know about please let me know and I will try to put it in the newsletter for you on time. Arti-

cles are due the second Friday of the month or you could send it by e-mail. My address is Valerie.armstrong@wmich.edu. I will try to check my e-mail every other day.

Congratulations to Kathi Cain-Babbitt, Willie Mitchell, Bryan Sutton, and myself. We were elected by our union (YOU) to represent our local and region for the 18th bi-annual Council 25 Convention in Dearborn Michigan on October 8th. Also attending is President Dennis Moore. But, before we go there, we will also be attending a Higher Education Conference in Lansing MI. On the 7th of October.

On September 17, 2011 Kathi, Kevin Villadson and I did the day of caring in Battle Creek at the food bank about twenty people showed to volunteer to bag up pasta. We bagged for three hours and was able to store up thousands of pasta for the food pantries around southwest Michigan.

It's getting chilly out there so make sure everyone dresses for the occasion. Flu season is upon us don't forget to sign up for the flu shot.

In solidarity,

Val Armstrong, VP

## Grievance Up-Dates

- Five terminations
- Up-grades to M4 Project specialist (training period) which was remanded back to 2nd step
- Time clock problems/no swipes heard at 3rd step, remanded back to 2nd step
- Holiday scheduling in DS
- Expedited discipline/delayed suspension was awarded
- Bids and transferring in Trades

Had a live appeal, with a terminated employee on Monday in Lansing/ another employee that was trying to get an appeal from council 25/ case has been closed



Please help your community and give to the United Way or give your time and Volunteer.

## Committee Up-Dates

**Women's Committee Report:** The meeting was held at the home office in Detroit, the committee went through eight boxes of petitions which was close to 122,000 signatures.

President Al Garrett spoke on the importance of the women's committee.

The new by-laws will be presented at the next women's committee along with getting participants for the fundraising committee and by-laws committee. All will held on October 8th.

### **Good and Welfare Committee**

United way is underway so please consider giving a dollar a pay period with the economy going the way it's going we should help out as best we can. Our G-N-W along with Western has very good incentives this year so be looking for that. I believe they will have drawings at each session and Western will have drawings every week until the end of October with great prizes.

September 17 was the day of caring project in Battle Creek from 9 until noon. It turned out well. Together with about 25 other Union members from battle Creek and Kalamazoo, we packed 8400 pounds of pasta for the Food Bank of South West MI. If you are interested in donating time please let Kathi know and she will let you know when the next Day of Caring project is.

### **Arbitration Committee**

After a long summer the arbitration committee met and voted on several third step answers. We had ten to vote on and the results were as followed:

- 2 answers were granted (no vote was required)
- 4 were voted to be sent to arbitration
- 2 were voted not to send
- 2 were moved back to second step for answer.

## Chief Steward's Report

AS the fall season rolls in, and the leaves on the trees begin to change, it reminds of how circumstances can change so quickly. Sometimes things change for the better and other times, not so much. I think we all have opportunities that present change almost daily. The difference between these opportunities is how we handle this change. Change is inevitable. We cannot stop it. We can react to it. IF we make the most of it, and mold that change into something positive, we can benefit from it. With the change of the season, it brings a new season. The new season, brings a renewal, a brand new start. Our campus looks beautiful, and it looks beautiful because of us. There have been a lot of compliments from some folks on our campus and I have had the pleasure of meeting some of them. When I tell them who I work for, they rave about how beautiful our campus is. I make sure they know the AF-SCME Local 1668 Union members are responsible for that. I also hear compliments about how the food that has been catered to certain events was prepared by our awesome AFSCME Local 1668 Union Employees in Dining Services. Be sure you do the same. Let those people know who we are and that we are the ones, who Make WMU Happen.

We received several grievance answers last

week. Some were favorable and some were not. The Health Care Grievance was answered and we voted to send it to Council 25 for Arbitration Consideration. The Answer was not unfavorable, but it did not address the change to our negotiated Benefits. The Annual Leave grievance in BC&SS was awarded in part, in that the University cannot do a blanket denial of requests, that the University is to follow our contract and re-processes all Annual Leave requests that were denied, or requested that the Employee resubmit. The grievance dealing with the time clock problems was remanded back to 2<sup>nd</sup> step with new information. The grievance dealing with the upgrades to the Special Project Trainees was remanded back to 2<sup>nd</sup> step with new information as well. The grievance dealing with posting of vacancies in Trades was awarded in that the vacancies are to be posted in accordance with the contract, Transparency is to be utilized to demonstrate that the University is not circumventing the bidding process and a committee is to be formed, to discuss the posting process. We also had some discipline and termination grievances answered.

We have several grievances that we are going to discuss possible settlements for next week. Including several cases that are waiting Council 25 Arbitration Consideration.

I have had a few different situations lately that got me to thinking about the task at hand in 2012. We have negotiations coming up and we need to start thinking of what we want to negotiate. If you have ideas, on how to improve upon things, now if the time to start talking about them with your bargaining reps. We have had some suggestions about overtime in a few departments. Should every department be handled the same? What is working? What is not? What do you think should change? Maybe we change nothing at all? Let the Bargaining Reps know what you think. No single person can make these decisions. We need your opinions.

After a crazy, crazy week, I just got two really awesome phone calls that will bring this week to a pleasant end. So on that happy note, I am signing off, before the phone rings again! It's Friday and I wanna go home! Get out and enjoy this weather while it lasts!

In Solidarity,

Kathi Babbitt

### COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM WORKSHOP

We Are the People is a diverse coalition of students, seniors and workers fighting to protect Michigan's working and middle-class families.

Workers are under attack, and we believe its time for Gov. Snyder and state politicians to stop the power struggles and start working together to create quality jobs and get our economy moving again.

Join us for an upcoming Action Team workshop to fight back -

WHEN: 9:00am, Saturday, [10/1/2011](#)

WHERE: IBEW 131 3641 East Cork, Kalamazoo, MI

Topics will include:

- ◆◆ Amplifying our message
- ◆◆ Using the power of 1-on-1 conversations to organize people and build movements
- ◆◆ Creating a local action plan together to fight back
- ◆◆ Holding Lansing politicians accountable.

If you have questions, please contact:

Adam Knott, Organizer

734.646.7299

**DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF  
SCHOOL FUNDING IN  
MICHIGAN  
MONDAY OCTOBER 3 •  
LINDEN GROVE MIDDLE  
SCHOOL  
(4242 ARBORETUM PARK-  
WAY, KALAMAZOO)  
• 7:00P.M.  
GREATER KALAMAZOO  
TOWN HALL MEETING  
WITH SENATOR BERT JOHNSON  
(SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS) &  
MARK TOTTEN**

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

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

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.

So if you are interested, please call the Union Hall we will make sure to get the time and place to meet in next months newsletter.

In solidarity,

Earl (Audi) Conner

## DID YOU KNOW???

Western Michigan University  
Sports Medicine Clinic  
**Physician Visits Physical Therapy  
Athletic Training**

- Open to **faculty/staff** and their **dependents**
- **No out of pocket expenses\***
- NO CO-PAY
- NO Deductible
- No Referral needed for physician appointments
- Athletic and Non-Athletic injuries treated
- Sports Participation Physicals

**\*for Faculty/Staff and their dependents with University BC/BS PPO  
Call 387-3287 to reach the Sindecuse Sports Medicine Clinic!**