

the 4 WORD

The Voice of Council 4 AFSCME Connecticut

November 2012

What's Inside

Election 2012: It's Fight Back Time

Members mobilizing against anti-union forces



Sandy Stough (Local 991, Manchester), left, and Council 4 President Anna Montalvo (Local 1522, Bridgeport) are ready to make a difference heading into the Nov. 6 election. The stakes have never been higher. Political coverage starts on page 5.

“The Wind in My Sails”

Local 749’s Charles Marino: Union Rep, Boater, Advocate for Disabled

When Charles Marino of AFSCME Local 749 (State Judicial) talks about getting the wind in his sails, he means it in more ways than one. A man of many hats, the 62-year-old Marino is a 17-year state employee who works as an administrative clerk at Waterbury Juvenile Court. He is Treasurer of Local 749 and a union steward.

And, he is a competitive sailor – an activity all the more impressive because Marino’s left leg has been completely paralyzed since birth, necessitating the use of a motorized wheelchair.



Charles Marino and Casper sailing on Long Island Sound.

Continued on page 4

| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Executive Director Opinion | p. 2 |
| Branford Workers Organize | p. 3 |
| Local 818’s Esther Rozum | p. 4 |
| Endorsed Candidates | p. 5 |
| Local 1303 Annual Mtg | p. 8 |

Vote Your Values and Stop the Union-Busters



The stakes are extraordinarily high for the coming election Nov. 6. Remember when Mitt Romney said “I like being able to fire people”? Talk about a Freudian slip.

I believe the anti-public sector policies and attitudes of the conservative wing of his party reflect that thinking – they enjoy firing people. And unionized public employees are the people they would most love to fire.

Public employees and the unions that represent them are under attack throughout the country – Wisconsin is the poster child for this undeserved onslaught against us. The conservatives and their media lackeys blame public employees for causing the economic collapse because they want the middle class to forget that it was the Wall Street big shots who brought down the economy.

Yet the party that led the country to the brink of another Depression is pushing the same failed policies that took us to the edge – rob the middle class to give to the rich, and let big money go unchecked. Romney is not alone in this. Linda McMahon supports this strategy too. They are both ultra-wealthy and completely out of touch with the middle class citizens who work hard every day to make our state and country great.

It’s a sure bet Romney, Ryan, McMahon and the rest will make our state and country a friendlier place for their rich friends and a much tougher one for those of us in the middle class.

Take a look at what’s already happened: 19 states introduced right-to-work-for-less legislation on top of the 23 that already have it; 31 states introduced legislation to weaken or destroy public sector collective bargaining; and 43 states have reduced or eliminated defined benefit pensions.

The pattern is clear. Over and over, we are being attacked. We may not be thinking about politics, but politics is always thinking about us...and not in a loving way.

The big money people who like firing people are working overtime this election, getting out the vote, spending cash and mobilizing their base. We need to do the same. There is just one big difference: there are a lot more of us. We need to agitate and motivate our co-workers, our family and our friends.

Vice President Biden called this election the “scariest” election he’s ever experienced. What he means is Romney, McMahon and the rest of them want to reduce our democracy to a little exclusive club for the ultra rich. The rest of us – “47 percent” of all Americans, according to Romney – need not apply.

Please take a stand on Nov. 6. Vote for President Obama, Chris Murphy and local candidates who share our belief in strong unions and a vibrant middle class.

In solidarity,
Sal Luciano
Sal Luciano
Executive Director

Ledyard School Board Recognizes Custodians Local 1303-108

Ledyard School Custodians, AFSCME Local 1303-108, answered the bell this summer when a major high school asbestos abatement project left them with more work and less time to ensure an orderly opening for the 2012-13 academic year.

“We rolled up our sleeves and got it done,” said Local 1303-108 President Roger Dickinson, noting that the 24-member bargaining unit was down four employees.

The Ledyard Board of Education noticed. At their monthly meeting on Sept. 19, Board President Sharon Hightower and Superintendent of Schools Michael Graner presented Local

1303-108 members with a special recognition award and showed a brief video highlighting their efforts.

“The custodians did an enormous amount of work,” Dr. Graner said, noting that Local 1303-108 members removed all furnishing from offices and classrooms impacted by the project and returned the areas to what he described as “pristine condition” for the start of the school year.

“We take a lot of pride in our work, so it’s great to get recognition from the school board and the superintendent,” Dickinson said. “We’re all here for the kids.”



L-R: Ledyard Board of Ed Chair Sharon Hightower, Local 1303-108 members Roger Dickinson, Sam McGuire, Tony Valero, Bill Brentnal and Superintendent Dr. Michael Graner.

Jeb Bush and Tom Foley: “We Don’t Need Public Unions.”

Why didn’t former and likely future gubernatorial candidate Tom Foley challenge Jeb Bush when he said, “I don’t think there should be public unions, period” at a forum hosted by Foley’s “think tank” Sept. 19 in Fairfield?

Call Foley and ask him if he agrees with Jeb’s anti-union position at 203-404-0235.

And while you’re at it, ask Foley why he thinks impoverishing retired workers is a good idea, because his Connecticut Policy Institute just put out a position paper calling for state workers to be put on 401(k)s.

Norwich School Secretaries Approve Contract

Norwich school secretaries give their all to help students, teachers and parents. Now they have a contract that shows respect for the work they do. Members of AFSCME Local 1303-190 voted Sept. 10 to ratify a new three-year collective bargaining agreement that includes raises totaling 9% as well as improved personal leave language and progressive discipline language.

Also under the terms of the agreement, several bargaining unit members will receive an additional \$2.36 an hour to equalize pay rates.

“We’re very pleased with this contract. It acknowledges the work we’ve done for the schools,” said former Local 1303-190 Co-President Sue Benoit.

Norwich school secretaries have foregone wage increases and accepted furlough days in recent years to help the school system get through some challenging times. “It’s a good feeling to get a settlement that’s nothing but positive,” said former Co-President Debbie D’Alessandro.

Council 4 Staff Representative Laurie Webster served as the union’s spokesman in contract negotiations. “Council 4 and Laurie did a great job for us,” added new President Dannette Thornton.



Front row, l-r: Local 1303-190 Negotiating Team members Dannette Thornton, Diane Harrington and Deb LaChance. Back row: Laurie Webster (Council 4 Staff Representative); Sue Benoit; Debby D’Alessandro and Denise Amburn.

Branford Town Workers Stand Up for Their Rights



Local 818-060 officers being sworn in, l-r: Janice Plaziak (President), Kathryn LaBanca (Treasurer), Anthony Cinacola (Vice President) and Barbara Neal (Secretary).

Close to 40 Branford Town Hall Employees and Town Supervisors gained a real voice on the job this summer when they voted to affiliate with Council 4.

Under municipal labor law, the Town had an obligation to recognize the new local unions, which it did without incident. Council 4 Field Representatives Dena Fleno and Bob Parziale worked with the groups and helped to guide them through the complexities of the affiliation process.

“We were the only unaffiliated groups in town and we felt devalued,” said Local 1303-458 President Joe Abbatello, an IT network engineer. “We wanted to have

a say in how we were treated. We wanted respect.”

Local 818-60 President Janice Plaziak, the town engineer, echoed that sentiment.

“We faced so much political uncertainty and we felt like we were being treated inequitably,” Plaziak said. “It seemed like the right time to have union representation with Council 4.”

The two local unions have begun preparing to negotiate for their first contracts. Council 4 Staff Representatives Anne Peckham and Tricia Cardin will serve as advocates for Locals 1303-458 and 818-60, respectively.



Council 4 Staff Rep Anne Peckham swears in Local 1303-458 officers Ed Giaimo (Vice President), Laura Magaraci (Secretary) and Joe Abbatello (President). Not pictured is Shannon Greenwood (Treasurer).

In the Public Service: Local 818's Esther Rozum

When Esther Rozum started working for the Town of Seymour, Lyndon B. Johnson was president. Gasoline was 24 cents a gallon. A postage stamp cost 5 cents. The Beatles and the Rolling Stones were starting to rule the rock and roll world. And America began noticing that a war was raging in a place called Vietnam.

Rozum, a member of AFSCME Local 818-009 (Seymour Supervisors) retired at the end of August after 47 years on the job, first as tax collector/assistant town clerk, then as town clerk. She eventually worked under 12 first selectmen. "You have to enjoy helping people. As long as I was able to help someone, I felt good about my job," Rozum reflected during a retirement party at Seymour Town Hall that drew a large crowd of family, co-workers and elected officials.

Asked to remember some of her favorite moments, Rozum spoke of a town-sponsored fundraiser to help Seymour residents serving their country. "Every year in mid-November, I would send out \$100 checks to the servicemen. They would write back with pictures and thank you notes. I loved that. It was fabulous."

Local 818-009 President Joe Kusiak said Rozum had a terrific sense of humor that endeared her to co-workers and citizens. "Esther had a long and memorable time as town clerk. It will be sad to see her go. But now this is Esther's time," Kusiak said.

Rozum has three children, 11 grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Her next act: "I'm going to help my daughter. I'm going to baby sit."



Local 818-009 President Joe Kusiak, left, presents a union recognition plaque to Esther Rozum.

Marino, continued from page 1

Not that Marino is looking for special accolades. "I've always felt if you don't adjust, you don't survive," he said.

Growing up in Westport, with the Long Island Sound practically in his backyard, Marino took to sailing immediately. Eventually he moved to Naugatuck, got married and started a family, which forced Marino to drift away from recreational sailing. So he turned to another favorite childhood sport, tennis.

Marino searched for venues that offered wheelchair tennis and discovered a program at Gaylord Hospital in Wallingford. "Someone at Gaylord mentioned sailing as a possible activity, so I gave up tennis and went back to sailing. I guess it's in my blood," he said.

Marino hooked up with the Sail Connecticut Access Program, a Westbrook-based volunteer program that offers persons with special needs the opportunity to enjoy sailing. Marino also joined the Waterbury Power Squadron, which is part of United States Power Squadrons, a non-profit boating education organization.

After training with other competitive sailors, Marino raced in his first regatta in June, the Robbie

Pierce One Design Regatta Larchmont, NY. "I came in last, but it was a good learning experience," he said.

In August, Marino placed third at the Lake Champlain Martin 16 Regatta on Mallett's Bay in Lake Champlain, Vt. "I hadn't gone up there to win but to compete," he said. "I really like the idea of competing, of seeing what I can do under stress."

Marino now owns a 31-foot sailboat that he keeps docked at Pilot's Point in Westbrook – the state's only marina that is fully accessible to people with disabilities. The boat needs some work, after which Marino plans to tackle more races in 2013. Marino enjoys both competitive and recreational sailing. "When you're sailing, your disability melts away. You and the boat become one," he observed.

He brings that same balance of dedication and perspective to his responsibilities as a state employee and union activist. Having spent 16 years at a small manufacturing company before coming to the state, he appreciates the benefits of union membership.

"I enjoy my job," Marino said. "But I also think unions are important to the quality of your work, whether it's job security or health care benefits. It's sad. So many people in the private sector don't have unions and are at the mercy of their employer."

Election 2012



Election Day is Nov. 6. This election is not about Democrats and Republicans or liberals fighting conservatives. It's about electing politicians who support public service workers. AFSCME members have the opportunity to make state and national gains this year by electing pro-worker candidates to state legislatures and start playing offense in state capitals across the country. At the top of the ticket, the contrast between President Barack Obama and Gov. Mitt Romney and his running mate Paul Ryan couldn't be more stark. Take a look at this side-by-side comparison of President Obama's and Governor Romney's plans for the United States. You'll see why we enthusiastically support President Obama for reelection.



From the Presidential race down to races for the Connecticut legislature, our union be fighting to set the stage for the next two years. So get the facts, stay informed, and above all, be sure to vote on Nov. 6. You can learn much more about the issues and candidates by logging onto our website at www.council4.org.



| Issues | President Barack Obama | Governor Mitt Romney |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Healthcare Reform | Obama signed into law the Affordable Care Act—aka Obamacare—in 2010, which immediately extended coverage to 6.6 million young Americans and made health care available to uninsured children with pre-existing conditions. Beginning in 2014, 30 million currently uninsured Americans, including adults with pre-existing conditions, will have health care coverage thanks to the ACA. The Supreme Court affirmed the law earlier this year. | Despite having supported his own version of Obamacare as Massachusetts governor, Romney has promised to let all 50 states opt-out of Obamacare while Congress repeals the law—which would mean the return of annual and lifetime caps on coverage, preexisting condition exclusions and skyrocketing premiums. He also supports ending the tax exclusion for employer-provided health insurance. |
| Economic Recovery | Obama signed the \$787 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in 2009 to spur economic growth amid the greatest recession since the Great Depression. The ARRA included \$210 billion for state and local governments, which helped fund critical public services and protect AFSCME member's jobs. As of August 2012, the United States has seen 29 straight months of job growth. | Romney was a strong opponent of the ARRA. He also penned a New York Times Op-Ed in 2008 titled "Let Detroit Go Bankrupt." He has continued to advocate for austerity measures similar to those that have kept the economy in Europe in recession. |
| Wall Street Reform | Obama signed the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act in 2010 to better regulate the financial sector and end the fast-and-loose practices that wrecked the American economy. The new law limits banks' ability to use our money in high-risk trades. It also created the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to crack down on abusive lending practices and protect consumers. | Romney supports repeal of the entire Dodd-Frank law and wants to deregulate Wall Street. This would allow the big banks to return to the risky practices that inflated the housing bubble only to later cause it to burst and leave millions of American homeowners underwater. |
| Retirement Security | In his 2011 State of the Union address, Obama committed to sustaining Social Security without putting at risk current retirees ... or people with disabilities; without slashing benefits for future generations" and without privatization. Obamacare added new Medicare benefits and years of solvency to the program. | The Romney-Ryan federal budget plan would turn Social Security into 401(k)-style private accounts, turn Medicare into a voucher program that would cost seniors \$6,400 more each year and turn Medicaid into a block grant that would shift costs to states and recipients. |
| Collective Bargaining | Obama called Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker's attack on collective bargaining "an assault on unions." After a similar attempt in Ohio, he said the economic downturn should not be used as an excuse to erode bargaining rights. Obama explained, "I'm going to stand up for collective bargaining." | In 2011, Romney stood behind Ohio's anti-collective bargaining bill "110 percent" before the citizens vetoed that law by a two-to-one margin. At a 2012 Republican primary debate, Romney vowed to sign a federal right-to-work-for-less law as President. He told the Wall Street Journal he wishes federal government employees weren't unionized. |
| Focus on Working Families | Obama's proposed 2013 budget prioritizes job creation and calls for increased investments in job training, infrastructure and manufacturing. He has fought to protect jobs in the public sector for teachers, public safety officers and others. Obama also proposes tax policies that help working families, including ending the Bush tax cuts for wealthy Americans. | The Ryan budget includes a massive new tax cut for the wealthiest Americans, paid for by cutting safety net programs, critical public services and aid to the states. Under the Romney-Ryan budget, millionaires would get a tax cut of \$246,000 a year while seniors and working families foot the bill. |

Election 2012

Council 4 Endorsement for U.S. Senate: Chris Murphy

Two years ago, Linda McMahon spent over \$50 million making false claims about Attorney General Richard Blumenthal. Now she's trying again. She's spending even more to try to smear our great friend, Congressman Chris Murphy. The voters didn't buy it then and elected Blumenthal to the Senate, and they won't buy it this time. Her money can buy a lot of lies, but it can't change the truth. She's anti-union, anti-worker, anti-Social Security.



CHRIS MURPHY:
Putting Middle-Class Families First



LINDA McMAHON:
Leaving the Middle Class Behind

PUBLIC SERVICE JOBS

Protecting Jobs and Defending Services.

Murphy opposed massive budget cuts that would have cost hundreds of thousands of jobs and cut vital working family programs and protections, like education and health care. (H.R. 1, Vote 147, 2/19/11)

Cutting the Safety Net for Middle-Class Families.

McMahon has vowed to slash public programs and eliminate positions, "putting the biggest burden on social programs" that help working families. (New Haven Register, 8/5/12)

TAX FAIRNESS

Putting Working Families First.

Murphy voted to extend tax relief for middle-class families, but voted to let tax breaks for the richest 2% of Americans expire. (H.R. 8, Vote 545, 8/1/12; Vote 543, 8/1/12)

Putting Millionaires Ahead of Middle-Class Families.

McMahon opposes any tax increases on the wealthy, leaving loopholes and special breaks in place for millionaires like herself, while reducing services for working families and the middle class. (New Haven Register, 8/20/12)

RETIREMENT SECURITY

Protecting the Right to Retire.

Murphy opposed the Romney-Ryan plan to privatize Medicare and replace it with a voucher program. He safeguarded guaranteed benefits for seniors today and in the future. (H.Con.Res. 34, Vote 77, 5/25/11)

Threatening Retirement Security.

McMahon won't commit to protecting Medicare and Social Security for future retirees, and supports proposals to privatize the programs and replace them with voucher schemes. (Record-Journal, 7/23/12; CNBC, 8/17/10)

Council 4 Endorsements for U.S. Congress



John Larson
1st District



Joe Courtney
2nd District



Rosa DeLauro
3rd District



Jim Himes
4th District



Elizabeth Esty
5th District

Council 4 Endorsements for CT General Assembly

1st Congressional District:

Matt Ritter, State Representative 1st District
Angel Arce, State Representative, 4th District
Ed Vargas, State Representative 6th District
Henry Genga, State Representative, 10th District
Geoff Luxenberg, State Representative 12th District
Joe Diminico, State Representative, 13th District
Corky Mazurek, State Senate, 16th District
Sandy Nafis, State Representative, 27th District
Russ Morin, State Representative, 28th District
Joe Aresimowicz, State Representative 30th District
Chip Flanagan, State Representative, 31st District
Jason Bowsza, State Representative 57th District
Mike Renzullo, State Representative, 63rd District
Dave Zoni, State Representative, 81st District
Gary LeBeau, State Senate, 3rd District
Steve Cassano, State Senate 4th District
Dave Roche, State Senate 31st District
Urania Petit, Hartford Registrar

2nd Congressional District:

John Murphy, State Representative 8th District
Chris Phelps, State Representative 32nd District
Ted Moukwasher, State Representative, 40th Dist.
Tim Bowles, State Representative, 42nd District
Mae Flexer, State Representative, 44th District
Steve Mikutel, State Representative, 45th District
Emmett Riley, State Representative, 46th District
Brian Sear, State Representative, 47th District
Linda Orange, State Representative, 48th District
Susan Johnson, State Representative, 49th District
Gregg Haddad, State Representative 54th District
Rich Marzi, State Representative, 55th District
David Alexander, State Representative, 58th District
David Kiner, State Representative, 59th District
Kevin Ryan, State Representative, 139th District
Cathy Osten, State Senator 19th District
Don Williams, State Senate, 29th District
James Crawford, State Senator 33rd District

3rd Congressional District:

Mary Mushinsky, State Representative 85th District
Vickie Nardello, State Representative 89th District
Pat Dillon, State Representative 92nd District
Toni Walker, State Representative 93rd District

Gary Holder-Winfield, State Representative 94th District
Juan Candelaria, State Representative 95th District
Roland Lemar, State Representative 96th District
James Albis, State Representative 99th District
Matt Lesser, State Representative 100th District
Theresa Conroy, State Representative 105th District
Aldon Hynes, State Representative 114th District
Louis Esposito, State Representative 116th District
Paul Davis, State Representative 117th District
Kim Rose, State Representative 118th District
Toni Harp, State Senate 10th District
Martin Looney, State Senate 11th District
Ed Meyer, State Senate 12th District
Steve Fontana, State Senate 34th District

4th Congressional District:

Terry Masters, State Representative 120th District
Kate Tepper, State Representative 142nd District
Jack Hennessy, State Representative 127th District
Chris Perone, State Representative, 137th District
Anthony Musto, State Senate 22nd District
Andres Ayala, State Senate 23rd District

5th Congressional District:

Mike Demicco, State Representative 21st District
Rick Lopes, State Representative 24th District
Bobby Sanchez, State Representative 25th District
Peter Tercyak, State Representative 26th District
Roberta Willis, State Representative 64th District
Michelle Cook, State Representative 65th District
Larry Butler, State Representative 72nd District
Hilda Santiago, State Representative 84th District
Theresa Conroy, State Representative 105th District
David Arconti, State Representative 109th District
Chuck Marsella, State Representative 80th District
Bob Godfrey, State Representative 110th District
Terry Gerratana, State Senate 6th District
Daniel Seger, State Senate 8th District
Dante Bartolomeo, State Senate 13th District
Bill Riiska, State Senate, 30th District

Candidates seeking our union's endorsement must submit a written questionnaire and be interviewed by our members on the Council 4 PEOPLE Committee. Recommendations for endorsement require the approval of the Council 4 Delegate Assembly.

**Get Union Smart! Text message "CT" to AFSCME (237263)
for the latest updates and alerts** *standard rates apply

AFSCME LOCAL 1303 ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, Nov. 17, 2012

10:00 a.m. @ Council 4 AFSCME

444 East Main Street

New Britain, CT

Refreshments provided

All Local 1303 members invited

Info: (860) 612-3847 or
Local1303@gmail.com

Retirees Blast McMahon Plan

Council 4 Retirees Chapter President Lillian Sewell blasted Senate candidate Linda McMahon after a news report revealed she advocates introducing a sunset provision into the Social Security Act and raising the retirement age.

"Linda McMahon's sunset proposal amounts to a death sentence for America's seniors," Sewell said. "No wonder she refuses to talk to reporters. She'd be forced to shed some sunlight on her support for a radical right-wing agenda."

As reported in the media Sept. 26, McMahon discussed making changes to Social Security during a Tea Party-sponsored town hall meeting in Waterford. She said she would consider raising the retirement age, means-testing benefits and establishing a sunset (or expiration) provision if the law is not renewed.

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"If McMahon believes it's fiscally responsible to drive seniors into poverty and slash the social safety net, she needs to tell us that," Sewell added. "She needs to explain herself to all voters, not just her Tea Party fan club."

In Memoriam: Shaun Cashman

Connecticut lost one of its best advocates for working people with the passing of Shaun Cashman, the former Department of Labor Commissioner who died Oct. 24.



Cashman headed the state Labor Department from 2001-2006, supervising a workforce that included members of AFSCME Local 269 (P-2 Human and Social Services) and Local 318 (NP-3 Clerical).

"Shaun was the best commissioner we ever had," former Local 269 President Carol Carney recalled. "He made DOL a great place to work. It was easy to work well with Shaun on behalf of our members."

Cashman's long and distinguished career as an advocate for workers included serving as Business Manager for Laborers' Local Union 611 for over 25 years, Business Agent for the Connecticut Laborers' District Council and President of the Connecticut State Building Trades.

Our condolences go out to Shaun's family and friends, including his niece Kelly Cashman, who is a Staff Representative for Council 4.

Council 4

Executive Director: Sal Luciano (Local 2663)

President: Clarke King (Local 1716)

Secretary: Anna Montalvo (Local 1522)

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