

the 4WORD

The Voice of Council 4 AFSCME Connecticut

March 2008

What's Inside

Executive
Director
Opinion

p. 2

Fire Aramark

p. 3

Legislative
Preview

p. 4

Meriden
Lockout

p. 6

State Worker
Fights for
the Blind

p. 7

With A Little Help From His Friends: Union Representation Gets Walker Bruce Back on Track



Walker Bruce, right, is back working, thanks to the help of Local 2663 and Council 4 Rep Bonnie Liedtke.

Walker Bruce of Local 2663 (P-2 State Human and Social Services) wants to share his story. "I am grateful to my union," he said "A lot of people extended a helping hand when I needed it most."

Bruce has been an exemplary employee with a spotless record for five-plus years, working as a Youth Service Officer for the Department of Children and Families. Yet he was terminated after suffering from a severe mental illness that resulted in his being physically unable to report to work or call-in for more than five days.

After being diagnosed, Bruce participated in intensive treatment and put his efforts towards regaining his health, attending in- and out-patient treatment and relying on his faith for guidance.

His union, meanwhile, took care of fighting for his job and healthcare benefits. Local 2663 and Council 4 strongly advocated for his illness to be treated with the same compassion as someone with cancer, coma or a broken back.

Bruce is now back at work and thriving after an arbitrator ruled in his favor. "The employer ignored Walker's medical certificate, which described his illness and his inability to report to work," said Council 4 Service Representative Bonnie Liedtke, who argued Bruce's case. The arbitrator ruled Bruce's termination was "based on critical, mistaken assumptions inconsistent with the facts."

Reflecting over a cup of coffee, Bruce proudly held up his paycheck and pointed to the line item showing his AFSCME union dues deduction. "This is the most important \$15 they ever took out of my check," he smiled. "The union saved my job and gave me back part of my life."

As Council 4 Executive Director Sal Luciano

put it, "Workers with all types of health problem often lose their jobs and their healthcare when they need it the most. That's why we're fighting for our members' rights and respect. And it's why we're fighting for single payer universal health care."

Bridges Employees Stand Together for a Fair Contract

Solidarity paid off with a strong new collective bargaining agreement for the members of Local 1303-143 who work at Bridges, a non-profit human services agency in Milford.

Having worked for a year without a contract, union leadership turned up the heat. As a private sector bargaining unit, the workers knew their options had to include the possibility of public action.

So union leadership kept the members regularly informed, set up an action committee; and planned ways to mobilize community support.

"We had a united front," said Local 1303 Co-President Christa Jacaruso, a Clinical Social Worker at Bridges, which provides mental health and addiction services to children and families.

With Council 4 Staff Representative Donna Johnson as their spokeswoman, Local 1303-143 refused to budge on givebacks, making it clear to management they would not roll over. The result: a new agreement that not only contains decent pay increases, but also equalizes certain benefits and holds the line on health care cost sharing increases.

"We definitely were persistent," said Co-President Angie Singleton, a Support Specialist at Bridges.



From left: Local 1303-143 Negotiating Team Members Hilary Rudy, Grace Triolo, Christa Jacaruso, Angie Singleton, Council 4 Staff Representative Donna Johnson and Marye Ann Maxwell.

The Dreamer and the Dream



I had the honor of traveling to Memphis to commemorate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. -- and to recognize the quiet heroism of AFSCME sanitation workers who courageously went on strike for human dignity 40 years ago.

Back in '68, the garbage men, as they were then called, wanted to join a union. It wasn't easy for them as many unions still were fairly segregated. They became Local 1733 of AFSCME.

Their work was backbreaking, smelly and dirty. It paid poorly at \$7 a day. Even though the garbage men worked 40 hours a week, they needed food stamps.

But that's not what triggered the strike.

Two events happened. First, a couple of workers, escaping a rain storm, hid in the refuse truck. Perhaps because of faulty wiring, the truck's compacter kicked in and the two men died a gruesome death. The city did not even pay their widows and families enough to cover burial costs.

Second, Mayor Herman Loeb told the workers to go home when it rained in a supposed cost-saving measure. The African-American workers later discovered that while they were not paid, their white counterparts were.

These events combined to cause the 1,200 workers -- all of whom but three were African Americans -- to vote unanimously to strike on Feb. 12., 1968. The strike lasted 65 days.

When told about the strikers, Dr. King wanted to come to Memphis. Fighting for these sanitation workers was exactly what he believed could spark the flame of hope in his crusade to lift up the lives of the working poor.

So Dr. King traveled to Memphis to remind the world that there is dignity in all labor and to support the sanitation workers who courageously struck their employer.

We all know what happened on April 4, 1968.

Martin Luther King did not go to Memphis to die. He went there because he thought it was morally reprehensible that people could work 40 a week and still be eligible for food stamps.

Dr. King rightly said, "Now our struggle is for genuine equality which means economic equality. What does it profit a man to be able to eat at an integrated lunch counter if he doesn't earn enough money to buy a hamburger and a cup of coffee?"

We've been wandering the wilderness for 40 years since Dr. King's assassination.

We live in a country where people work more than full time, but have to sleep in emergency shelters because they do not earn enough to pay their rent.

We live in a country where 2 million people stand to lose their homes yet the government wants to bail out the predatory lenders who caused the problem.

We live in a country where working people are falling behind, yet the president wants to make permanent tax cuts for the wealthy.

We live in a country where over half the people who filed for bankruptcy did so because of medical bills, yet Congress made it nearly impossible to file for bankruptcy.

And we live in a country where access to health care is far from universal, particularly affecting women, children and people of color. As Dr. King himself said, "Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane."

Flash forward to today's "debate" about capping property taxes and rolling back public services. Then, think back to how the strike in Memphis could have been averted but for the mayor's insistence that he could not give more money to the sanitation workers without raising property taxes.

You realize that not too much has changed in 40 years since the Memphis strike and Dr. King's assassination.

Dr. King died fighting for a dream. It is only right to honor the dreamer with national holidays and monuments and commemorative celebrations. But let us not ignore his dream. We owe it to Dr. King, to the courageous garbage men in Memphis, and to ourselves, to fight for the working poor and to stand up for our union.

In solidarity

Sal Luciano

Sal Luciano

Executive Director

FAILING ARAMARK SHOULD BE "EXPELLED" FROM NEW HAVEN

Calling the privatization of facilities management a disaster for New Haven's school children, Council 4 members in New Haven launched a grass roots campaign to get the city to terminate its contract with the notorious privateer.

"Aramark is failing our workers, failing taxpayers, failing our schools and, more importantly, failing our kids," Local 287 President Robert Montuori told the New Haven Board of Education in January. "Aramark has failed so many times they should be expelled from city schools."

Local 287 represents more than 200 custodians in the New Haven school system, who have demanded the removal of the out-of-state company that performs school custodial and cafeteria services, citing the company's incompetence and mismanagement.

Union members presented a petition demanding the ouster of Aramark at the New Haven Board of Education's meeting on January 14. More than 50 custodians were joined by food service workers under the UNITE-HERE union umbrella who are also seeking an end to Aramark's food services contract with New Haven.

School employees contend that Aramark, which is based in Pennsylvania, has been an unmitigated disaster, costing New Haven taxpayers dearly while making the schools less clean and less functional.

The towns of West Hartford and East Granby have already dropped Aramark because of the company's repeated pattern of failing to deliver promised services. Both towns returned to self-operational facilities management.

"The New Haven school system should follow those examples," Montuori said.

Council 4 unions in New Haven, such as Local 3144, the New Haven Management Union, are mobilizing their members in the campaign against Aramark.

"Private companies put profits ahead of kids and our workers," said Local 3144 President Larry Amendola.



Local 287 President Robert Montuori, at podium, testifies about the failures of Aramark before the New Haven Board of Education.

Region 1 School Employees Assist Local Social Services



Local 1303-266 of Council 4, representing non-instructional employees in the Housatonic Valley Regional School District 1, donated \$1,500 to social service programs administered by the towns of Canaan, Cornwall, Falls Village, Kent, Salisbury and Sharon. The union's contribution will help subsidize important needs such as heating oil, gasoline or groceries. Pictured from left: Local 1303-266 members Al Gould, Susan Harris, Lynn Scoville, Michelle Curtis and Carolyn Lomax, and Cornwall Social Services Director Jill Gibbons.

Happy 80th, Lois O'Connor



The Council 4 Retirees Chapter took time out Jan. 30 to honor longtime AFSCME union stalwart and activist Lois O'Connor on her 80th birthday. From left: Doug Evans, Lois Maitz, Lil Aucaigne, Lois O'Connor, Shirley Grande and Lucy Leach.

Arbitrator Rules for Norwalk Taxing District Local

Local 1303-364 of Council 4, representing the 3rd Taxing District in Norwalk, prevailed in an arbitration involving the assignment of work to non-bargaining unit employees.

The union brought the matter to arbitration, claiming the District violated a past practice when it assigned holiday lighting work that had been performed by two unionized employees to non-union personnel. Local 1303-364 contended the employer's action was also a backdoor attempt to narrow the scope of the union's work jurisdiction.

The arbitrator ruled in favor of the union, agreeing that the employer had violated past practice. The award required the employer to compensate the grievant for monies lost and continue to assign two Local 1303-364 members to future holiday lighting ceremonies.

Congratulations to Local 1303-364 President Joe Chariott, who kept records and fought for his members' rights, and to Council 4 Staff Representative Paul Wallace, who argued the case.

Workers Memorial Day Reminder

Council 4 will mark national Workers Memorial Day on April 28, 2008 with a ceremony in front of our Workers Memorial Monument in New Britain. If you know of a Council 4 AFSCME member who lost his or her life in 2007 because of an on-the-job fatality or illness, please contact Larry Dorman of Council 4 at (860) 224-4000 so we can add his or her name to the monument.

State Legislative Preview: Beware of the Tax Cap!



Our paychecks, pension and health care are under direct attack at the legislature this year. Among the most hotly debated issues: Gov. Rell's proposal for a state-mandated 3% tax cap on municipal budgets.

Rell's plan is a variation on the "starve government" approach championed by right wing ideologues. Healthcare and energy costs alone will account for 3% or more of the budget growth in cities and towns, leaving no room to fund public services and jobs that sustain the middle class.

During a recent appearance on the Brad Davis radio show on WDRC, Rell said the enactment of a hard tax cap on cities and towns would create greater pressure to weaken binding arbitration if not kill it outright – all under the guise of "tax reform." The destruction of the ability of municipalities to raise needed funds would lead to similar efforts at the state level.

"The simplicity of (Rell's tax cap proposal) makes it powerful," Hartford Courant columnist and former gubernatorial candidate Bill Curry warned Council 4 Presidents at a recent meeting. "It's an alarming affront to democracy."

Curry pointed out that similar laws in California and Massachusetts have led to wholesale slashing of public services, ranging from education to public safety to street cleaning.

Council 4 will work with allied organizations to defeat a municipal tax cap. At the same time, Council 4 union members will make a spirited push for healthcare reform, specifically supporting legislation to create a healthcare purchasing collective for municipal and non-profit employers. (See related story on current healthcare plans and proposals.)

This year is the "short" session of the state legislature, with a scheduled end date of May 7. If you would like to get involved in fighting for our rights at the Capitol, contact Dennis O'Neil or Brian Anderson of Council 4 at (860) 224-4000.

Stay tuned for the latest legislative developments by clicking on www.council4.org. And be sure to attend the Council 4 Members' Lobby Day on April 16 at the State Capitol.

Healthcare Reform Update

Public demand for significant healthcare reform has been growing. Various proposals battled for attention during the 2007 Connecticut General Assembly session. In the end there was much sound and fury but few tangible accomplishments.

A new HealthFirst Connecticut Authority was created during the last legislative session and charged with reporting recommendations by December 1, 2008 to the Public Health and Insurance committees of the legislature. Council 4 Executive Director Sal Luciano has been appointed labor representative to the new authority, whose mission includes evaluating alternatives for providing quality, affordable and sustainable health care for all state residents.

Three other Connecticut initiatives bear watching during 2008 – Mega-MEHIP, Representative Chris Donovan's municipal pooling proposal, and Governor Jodi Rell's Charter Oak Plan.

Mega-MEHIP: The Municipal Employee Health Insurance Program (MEHIP) was set up in 1996 to help cities and towns provide health coverage for municipal employees. It has since been expanded to include nonprofit organizations and community action agencies. Currently a Mega-MEHIP proposal is out for bid.

It would greatly expand the potential pool of eligible employees, lower administrative costs, encourage preventive care, enhance the state's bargaining power with the pharmaceutical companies and reduce costs for municipalities and employees. Council 4 has been intimately involved in designing and pushing this new plan.

The State is currently evaluating bids from vendors. The program is expected to be available by July 1.

Municipal Pooling: Representative Chris Donovan of Meriden is taking yet another approach to expanding the municipal insurance pool. His proposal would allow municipalities to voluntarily participate in the existing insurance pool for state employees.

Donovan has been visiting various cities and towns to gather existing cost data and explain potential cost savings of participating in such a vastly expanded pool. Savings for both municipalities and employees appear significant. This is a proposal that bears watching during the year.

Charter Oak Plan: Governor Rell's Charter Oak Plan seeks to provide coverage to the uninsured, who are not eligible for other public programs like SAGA and HUSKY. The program seeks to provide coverage to uninsured adults at an annual amount of \$3,000. Healthcare advocates doubt such a cost structure will make health insurance affordable and available to the uninsured. The Charter Oak Plan is also currently out for bid.

More Than 3 Million Seniors Will Fall Into "Donut Hole" in 2008

By Lillian Sewell, Council 4 Retiree Chapter President



This will not be a happy New Year for millions of seniors. More seniors than ever are expected to fall into the Medicare Part D "donut hole" in 2008, the coverage gap that requires seniors to pay the full cost of their prescription drugs, according to the Alliance for Retired Americans.

Under the Medicare Part D rules pushed by the Bush administration and passed by Congress in 2003, seniors are on the hook for prescription expenses between the annual amounts of \$2,510 and \$5,726 in 2008. This gap of more than \$3,200 has been dubbed the "donut hole."

The total costs for seniors in the "donut hole," when you add in deductibles and co-pays, will hit \$4,050, about \$200 more than in 2007, the Alliance reported.

More than three million of the 24 million Part D enrollees will have to pay the \$4,050 in out-of-pocket expenses before Medicare kicks back in and provides catastrophic-care coverage, paying 95 percent of those prescription costs.

Even if they don't fall into the hole, seniors will pay nearly 25 percent more in premiums for their 2008 Medicare Part D prescription coverage than they did in 2007, reports the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR).

The bottom line: Between rising premiums, fewer prescriptions being covered and the growing "donut hole," seniors will pay more for their drugs on every front this year.

Darien School Employees Ratify New Pacts

Congratulations to the members of Local 1303-357, Darien Board of Education Cafeteria Employees, who ratified a new three-year collective bargaining agreement that includes general wage increases of 3.5% and a first-ever uniform allowance.

"We're very pleased with this contract and the representation we've received from Council 4," said Local 1303-357 President Susan Hunter (pictured below), who works at Hindley Elementary School. The union negotiating committee members included Marilyn Stepkoski, Willie Mae Powell and Kathy Mehner, along with Hunter.



Also in Darien, the members of Local 1303-141, Board of Education Nurses, ratified a new three-year collective bargaining agreement that included a 4% general wage increase and other enhancements. Negotiating committee members were Local 1303-141 President Joann Eckstein, Cyndee Rogers and Council 4 Staff Representative Vicki DeFrank.

In the Public Service: Owen Little



East Haven Animal Control Officer and Local 818 President Owen Little, and Assistant ACO Kristina Ruszczyk with Harley.

Just as artists are known to sometimes suffer for the work they love, Owen Little, president of the Local 818 subchapter in East Haven, has willingly suffered for his.

Little is the Animal Control Officer for East Haven. In the line of duty, he's been hit by a car while rescuing a dog (he took the dog to the hospital before tending to himself) and fallen 18 feet off a concrete ledge while rescuing stranded canines.

He's also sat alone in his truck, tears streaming down his face, after euthanizing 34 pit bulls trained for dog fighting.

Little's commitment to his job and to animals recently earned him the Paul A. Denault Memorial Award as Connecticut's Animal Control Officer of the Year. He received the award at the State Department of Agriculture's Annual Conference of State Animal Control Officers at the Foxwoods Museum and Conference Center.

"It's really an honor to be recognized by your peers," Little said while completing his daily duties at the animal shelter before heading out to run his local union meeting.

Little has worked in animal control for 15 years. He is one of the few municipal animal control officers in Connecticut who carries a gun and has powers of arrest. He takes those powers seriously, working with police and prosecutors to punish those who commit animal cruelty.

Yet no one is happier than Little when he and Assistant Animal Control Officer Kristina Ruszczyk are able to find a nurturing home for a stray dog or cat residing at the shelter.

"I love coming to work every day. I'm a very lucky man," Little said.

Council 4 Veterans Picnic Set for May 24, 2008

The 5th Annual Council 4 Veterans Memorial Day Picnic is set for Saturday, May 24, 2008 at the Rocky Hill Veterans Home.

If you would like to help make a difference by volunteering, please contact event chair Ed Zimnoch of Local 303 at (860) 490-0456.

If you or your local union would like to donate food, beverages, etc., please contact Megan Batchelder of Council 4 at (860) 224-4000.

For more info, click on www.council4.org.

Meriden City Workers Fight Lockout, Service Cuts



Local 595 President Diana Naimo (bottom steps, speaking into megaphone mike) addresses 200 union members and community supporters at a rally for Meriden public service workers.

More than 200 union members marched on Meriden City Hall to protest the lockout of city employees represented by Local 595 of Council 4. City employees were locked out of their jobs on the day after Thanksgiving as well as Christmas and New Year's Eve.

The lockout was ordered by City Manager Lawrence Kendzior, whose own personal ironclad contract will cost Meriden taxpayers at least \$1 million. In its labor charge against the city, Council 4 described Kendzior's actions as a "wanton and willful disregard" of the law.

"We have always been willing to do our share to save city services, but we have been cut to the bone," said Local 595 President Diana Naimo, who serves as recreation director at the Meriden Senior Center. "More cuts in the services our members provide will only result in a dysfunctional city."

Council 4 has filed labor board charges against Kendzior and the city, calling the lockout a violation of Connecticut law. A mediation hearing was scheduled to take place as this newsletter went to press.

AFSCME Local 1303 2008-2009 Scholarships

Local 1303 will be offering up to eight (8) \$1,000 Scholarships to 2008 graduating high school seniors who will be enrolled in an accredited university, college or technical school for the Fall 2008 semester, and who have a parent or guardian who is a member in good standing with AFSCME Local 1303.

For information or to request an application, please call our office @ 860.612.3847.

Deadline for receipt of completed application is Monday, April 28, 2008.

Waterford Dispatchers Send Care Package to Town Resident Serving in Iraq

Local 1303-435 of Council 4, representing Waterford dispatchers, stepped up to the plate for the son of a town police officer stationed in Baghdad.

Workers sent a special holiday care package to PFC Jeremy Anderson, 22, who is serving his first tour of duty in the Middle East. Jeremy's father David Anderson is a Waterford Police Officer and a retired Senior Chief in the U.S. Navy.

The union's \$300 gift package included cigars, beef jerky, coffee, sanitary wipes for hands, facial wipes, candy, gum, shampoo, tooth paste, newspapers, magazines, iced tea and Crystal Light individual mixes, lip balm, microwave popcorn and well wishing greeting cards.

David Anderson thanked Local 1303-435 members for their generosity:

"Care packages like the one the Waterford dispatchers sent to my son Jeremy mean as much, if not more to the troops overseas, as the packages that they receive from their families. It just puts a huge lump in their throats."

Said Local 1303-435 President Laurie Lewis, "It seems like such a small token for the huge sacrifice this 22-year-old is making for our country."

Council 4 Annual Conference April 18-20 in Farmington

Council 4's annual conference takes place Friday, April 18 through Sunday, April 20, 2008 at the Farmington Marriott Hotel.

The conference will feature workshops, the Women's Committee Charity Auction, a PEOPLE political mobilization event and the always-popular Member Recognition Dinner.

You can obtain registration and member recognition nomination forms online by clicking www.council4.org or by calling Council 4 at (860) 224-4000.

**FOR THE LATEST
HAPPENINGS CHECK
WWW.COUNCIL4.ORG**

Council 4 Members Fight "The Double Whammy"



Ken Michelson of Local 1303-056 (Plainville Dept. of Public Works) makes his point during the recent Council 4 leadership meeting "Fighting the Double Whammy: Health Care Reform and the Property Tax Cap." Listening to Michelson, below from left, are State Rep. Joe Aresimowicz (D-30), Council 4 Political Coordinator Dennis O'Neil and Hartford Courant editorial writer Bill Curry. "The cost of health care is strangling us," Michelson said. "We've got to get universal health care or we're in trouble."



New Milford Local Wins Contract Campaign

Thanks to a combination of strong Council 4 representation and public mobilization, members of Local 1303-183 (Town of New Milford) finally have a new collective bargaining agreement in place.

The union, with Council 4 Staff Representative Vicki DeFrank as spokesperson, reached an agreement last year. After the Mayor and Town Council tabled acting on the agreement, Council 4 filed unfair labor practice charges against the town.

Local union members also unanimously signed a petition and delivered it to the Mayor, asking for immediate action on the contract. The members also spoke out at Town Council meetings.

As a result of the union's action, the Town Council implemented the contract at their January 2008 meeting. The new agreement includes general wage increases (retroactive to last summer) and other enhancements.

"Our members stood firm and spoke up for their rights and for the quality of the services they provide our citizens," said Local 1303-183 President Christine Thomas, who is the New Milford assistant sanitarian.

Local 538's David McCue Advocates for Blind Employees

State clerical employee David McCue of Local 538 is legally blind and relies on his guide dog Hannah to get through the day.

But his employer, the Department of Administrative Services, picked the wrong battle when it tried to force McCue to use vacation time for mandatory guide dog training.

McCue argued that he should be allowed to use sick time for a two-week training session with Hannah. He contacted Council 4 Service Representative Thomas Sellas, who helped McCue secure a stipulated agreement restoring his vacation time.

McCue is not finished. He contacted state legislators about the hassles he received from DAS and got the attention of Sen. Edith Prague and Rep. Kevin Ryan, Co-Chairs of the General Assembly's Labor Committee. Prague and Ryan hope to raise legislation to allow any worker participating in mandated guide dog training to first use sick time or tap into a sick leave bank.

"Without Council 4 I would not have gotten justice, but my stipulated agreement was designed specifically for my case," McCue explained. "The next step is to work with Council 4 to get a new law passed."

McCue is gearing up for the legislative process and encourages Council 4 members to support the effort. "You can't ever stop fighting because you can benefit someone coming after you," he said.



Dave McCue and Hannah.

East Hartford School Employees Join Council 4

Nearly 80 East Hartford public schools' support staff - including secretaries, security officers, information technology staff and more - have voted to join Council 4.

"We're glad to be a part of Council 4," said Cheryl LaRochelle, a secretary at Langford Elementary School. "We're going to get strong representation and a real voice on the job."

Added Oksana Hart, a secretary at East Hartford Middle School, "Council 4 will help us improve the quality of our jobs and the services we provide to the school system and to the kids."



In Memoriam: Andy Romegialli



Council 4 Staff Representative Andrew Romegialli passed away Feb. 10, 2008 after a brief illness. From his days on the shop floor as a Machinists union leader, to the many years he spent fighting for Council 4 members, Andy never wavered in his commitment to the righteousness of our cause. We will have a full tribute to Andy in our next edition of *The 4-Word*.

Union & Committee Meetings

Local 196 (State Clerical): Feb. 19, 2008 at 5:30 p.m., Local 196 Office, 705 North Mountain Rd., Newington, CT. Agenda: Regular order of business. Next meeting: April 15.

Local 318 (State Clerical): April 25, 2008 at 5:30 p.m., AquaTurf Banquet Facility, Southington, CT. Agenda: Regular order of business followed by Spring Fling.

Local 355 (State Clerical): March 6, 2008 at 5:30 p.m., Eastern CT State University, Student Center, Room 107. Agenda: Regular order of business..

Local 610 (State Clerical): Oct. 17, 2008 at 5:30 p.m., Southeastern Mental Health Authority. Agenda: Regular order of business.

Local 818 (Supervisors): Feb. 14, 2008 at 6:00 p.m., 1 Grove St., New Britain, CT. Agenda: Regular order of business.

Local 1303-132 (CREC Paras/Child Care): March 29, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. at Council 4 Office, 444 East Main St., New Britain, CT. Agenda: Regular order of business.

Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU): March 26, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. at Council 4, New Britain, CT.

Council 4 Civil Rights Committee: March 20, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. at Council 4 offices in New Britain.

Council 4 Retiree Chapter: Feb. 27, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. at Council 4 in New Britain. Next meeting: March 26, 2008.

Union Membership Up In 2007

New data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics shows union membership in the United States increased last year by 311,000 to 15.7 million – the largest annual increase since 1983.

“The announcement that more workers are joining unions is good news for all Americans,” said AFSCME International President Gerald McEntee.

Nearly 50,000 workers nationwide joined AFSCME unions in 2007, according to analysis from the AFL-CIO. Statistics show that union members uniformly have higher pay, better benefits and greater protection on the job than their non-union counterparts.

The advantages of having a union on the job were clear in 2007. Last year, median weekly pay for union members was \$863, while those who were not represented by unions had median weekly earnings of \$663.

Learn more about the union advantage at www.council4.org

Council 4

Executive Director: Sal Luciano

President: Tom Ledoux

Secretary: Clarke King

444 East Main Street

New Britain, CT 06051

Phone: 860-224-4000

E-mail: info@council4.org

On the web: www.council4.org

The 4 Word

Editor: Larry Dorman

860-612-3855

ldorman@council4.org

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 1038
New Britain, CT

Council 4 AFSCME, AFL-CIO
444 East Main Street
New Britain, CT 06051