

the 4WORD

The Voice of Council 4 AFSCME Connecticut

SEPT. 2008

What's Inside



THE STRANGE CASE OF OUR DISAPPEARING PENSIONS

Pick up a newspaper, turn on the TV, and pretty quickly you'll find a story about how pensions are ruining the economy. There's a full-court press, coming from business, from academia, from right-wing politicians, and, sadly, some progressive politicians who should know better.

The question isn't whether it's happening, but why? Learn more, starting on page 3.

Alert: Your union rights will be at risk on November 4.

This Election Day, Nov. 4, there will be a question on the ballot: "Shall there be a Constitutional Convention to amend or revise the Constitution of the state?" A Constitutional Convention (Con Con) is a bad idea for working families.

According to the rules, the state legislature appoints the delegates to a constitutional convention. A convention of lobbyists, special interests and insiders isn't change; it's just politics as usual.

It's telling to look at who is supporting the "Vote Yes" side. Their stated objective is to win initiative and referendum in Connecticut, giving anti-government, anti-union reactionaries a tool to put hot-button issues up for a public vote. They've openly stated examples of issues they would like to see the public vote on, including the elimination of binding arbitration and the capping of property taxes.

That's just for starters. Imagine what former Governor John Rowland did to public employees in Waterbury -- stripping them of collective bargaining rights -- expanded statewide to all public service workers. A Con Con would be the springboard to starve public services and increase support for privatization. It would further delay legislative action on important issues like healthcare reform and educating funding.

This fall, you will likely hear feel-good media reports from the "Vote Yes" side, talking about initiative and referendum, conjuring up an image of regular folks going to a good old-fashioned New England town hall meeting to talk about the vital issues of the day. Don't be fooled.

A constitutional convention would be a group of lobbyists and special interests appointed by the General Assembly. Just remember that despite their good-government public message, there is a reactionary agenda lurking behind Con Con. On November 4, Vote **NO** on **CON CON**.



**VOTE NO ON
CON CON**

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LABOR DAY 2008: A Time for Change

Sal Luciano

Sal Luciano

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This year, the time between Labor Day and Election Day on Nov. 4 is especially important for us in Connecticut.

The stakes have never been higher for working people--and we're ready to mobilize as never before for

November's elections because we are ready to turn around America.

In Connecticut and across the country, working families are being hit hard in this economy. A jaw-dropping 84 percent of people now say our country is headed in the wrong direction.

And it's no wonder. All of us know people who are on the verge of losing their homes, people who have lost jobs or are afraid they will lose them, people who can't afford to get the health care they need -- even if they have insurance.

Since President Bush took office, we've lost more than 3 million good manufacturing jobs nationally, including nearly 45,000 in Connecticut. The price of gasoline has risen from \$1.50 to more than \$4 a gallon. Forty-seven million of us nationally have no health insurance, including 325,000 right here in our state.

Instead of creating jobs by building roads and schools here in America, we're building them in Iraq--spending \$10 billion a month on a war that never should have been started. And we're almost bankrupt from financing tax cuts that never should have been given to the rich -- who never needed them in the first place.

The wealthy, CEOs, multinational corporations and insurance companies are doing just fine in today's economy, raking in the dough while everyone else is left behind.

Why? Because under the Bush administration, corporations and the rich have all the power. When working people want to join together to form a union so they can bargain for better wages, benefits and working conditions, they have to do it in a lopsided system that allows company executives to harass, intimidate and even fire them.

In Connecticut and around the country, working families face a fundamental choice. Do we continue down the low road of inequality where corporations and the wealthy always get more than their fair share?

Or do we turn around America and head to higher ground, where there's quality, affordable healthcare for everyone, fair trade and the freedom to improve our lives through unions?

This Labor Day, we're setting out to turn around America.

Together, we are engaging in the broadest grassroots mobilization effort ever to elect leaders who will work for working people. And with good reason. Sen. Barack Obama puts communities--not corporations--first, and has helped average people get our fair share. He has voted with working families and our unions 98 percent of the time.

Sen. Obama is committed to creating good middle-class jobs, and he wants to end tax breaks for corporations that send jobs overseas. He has a plan to make health care available to all, lower costs and make sure no one is denied care.

Sen. Obama strongly supports the freedom of workers to form unions and bargain for a better life and has been side by side with us on picket lines and in organizing and bargaining campaigns again and again.

By contrast, Sen. John McCain plans to continue the Bush record of putting corporate profit over working families' needs. A centerpiece of his economic plan is \$175 billion a year in tax cuts for corporations. McCain is a self-proclaimed free-trader who has voted for the trade deals that have shipped jobs overseas.

He wants to tax our health care benefits and cut back employer-provided health care, leaving workers to fend for themselves in the private insurance market. McCain even tried to repeal the minimum wage, and he continues to support tax breaks for Big Oil.

McCain, quite simply, equals McSame: Four more years of the failed Bush policies that have brought working Americans to the brink of economic disaster.

Obama, on the other hand, offers precisely what America needs. Addressing delegates to the AFSCME International Convention this summer, he articulated a vision built on "jobs for the jobless and hope for the hopeless."

That is a positive message for Labor Day and every day. And it's what your Council 4 union stands for, not just on Labor Day or Election day, but every day.

In solidarity

Sal Luciano

Sal Luciano
Executive Director

THE STRANGE CASE OF THE DISAPPEARING PENSIONS

What's In a Name? The Great Pension Hoax

If you look up “pension” in the dictionary, you find this: Pen-sion (‘pen(t)-shdn) n. 1: A fixed sum paid regularly to a person . . . paid under given conditions to a person following retirement. What you don’t find under the definition, or anywhere else, is “Defined Contribution Plan” (DC) nor do you find “Defined Benefit Plan” (DB). These terms were made up to make us think a DC plan is a pension.

Wrong! A defined contribution plan is just a savings account with a fancy name. But it also makes us think that a DB does not have a defined contribution. It does, just not a *limited* contribution.

A DB plan certainly defines the contribution, how could it not? But it also has a specific benefit a retired employee will receive, as this conjured up name suggests. So, a DB (that is, “real pension”) has both a defined contribution and a defined benefit. *A DC plan an explicitly defined limit on contributions, but it has no defined benefit at all.*

Everywhere we turn these days, we find some “talking head,” some “expert” telling us pensions are destroying the economy. In his new book, *While America Aged*, business journalist Roger Lowenstein argues that real pensions are unwise because employers cannot accurately calculate what the pension cost will be. He offers fear-producing examples: like the man who lived to be 111 years old and received a pension payment for more than 50 years; or that General Motors almost went broke because of pension debt.

This nonsensical story telling masks the truth: Real pensions really benefit the economy; future cost estimates are very accurate and reliable; *and other than starving our retirees, nothing is cheaper than a well-managed real pension plan.* To understand the falsity of these claims, it is necessary to understand how a real pension really works.

Unlike a DC, a real pension plan is designed to provide a steady lifetime income to a retired employee. The trick is to put enough money into the pension fund to keep paying the retiree whether it’s five of fifty years. So the contribution is *defined*, but not *capped*

(Social Security is a DB plan; a 401 (k) is not). For an employer to put enough money away sounds like a risky venture – at least that’s what the employers and conservative politicians want us to believe.

If a company makes the contribution to a real pension an expert in actuarial science will tell it how much the money the company should invest to pay every employee a retirement check for life. That figure will include those few who “beat the house” by living a long long time (so much for the 111 year old man story). History demonstrates that actuarial science is remarkably accurate.

If a company puts in the amount the actuarial expert recommends, the cost the company will actually pay for those real pension checks *will only be 25¢ on the dollar*, including Lowenstein’s 111 year old man! By any measure that is a very good deal for the employer. So why do business and conservative politicians hate real pension plans? Why is there a full court press to eliminate them?

The Full Court Press to Take Your Pension

There’s some truth in that old joke that, just because your paranoid, it doesn’t mean someone’s not out to get you. When it comes to pensions, there is a conspiracy – maybe not actually a secret back room deal, but a conspiracy nonetheless. Pick up a newspaper, turn on the TV, and pretty quickly you’ll find a story about how pensions are ruining the economy.

The question isn’t *whether* it’s happening, but *why*?

By the time an employee retires, the pension fund has quadrupled the investment. A sweet deal for taxpayers, if only someone would tell them the truth. No smart politician or CEO would ignore a deal that good. There has to be something else – and there is.

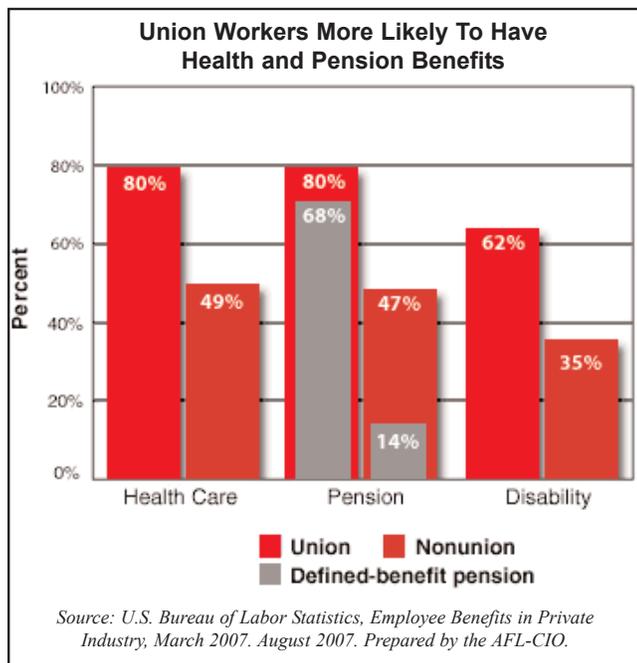
Pension funds, are enormous investment machines. They control hundreds of billions of dollars. The California state employee fund (CalPers) *alone* has over \$200 billion. The Connecticut Retirement Pension and Trust Fund (CRPTF), which invests for 13 separate funds, including state and municipal employee plans controls investments of over \$26 billion. It is a combination of size and competence that produces substantial success in all markets. Contrary to what the 401(k) crowd will tell you, the chances of an individual investor beating the DB funds is unlikely.

So there you have it: money and power.

For banks, insurance companies and other individual investment services, 401(k)s are “cash cows.” Many of the limitations on banking and investment institutions that were put in place after the market crash of 1929 are either gone or under regulated by the everything-goes-for-business Bush Administration.

That loosening of regulation gave the green light to investment schemes that have the very real potential of significantly damaging the entire economy, and one of them did. It was the relaxation of banking rules and regulation that created the fertile earth from which the disastrous sub-prime mortgage scandal uncontrollably grew. There are no 401(k) scandals to match this one, and hopefully there won’t be. Nevertheless, the banking industry saw a grand opportunity.

Banks realized that if the public could be persuaded that real pensions cost too much, they could get middle class voters (the very people who need them) to support their destruction. Non-union corporations, realizing a real pension was no longer as important for job recruitment, got rid of real pensions. 401(k)s were offered everywhere. A dizzying array of choices for inexperienced investors were presented, along with substantial hard-to-understand fee structures, providing a dangerous substitute for the real retirement security of a real pension.



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Fortunately the biggest power grab of all proved to be an overreach: Social Security. Capitalizing on his "mission accomplished" war popularity, George Bush tried to turn Social Security, America's largest real pension, into a glorified 401 (k).

Called "Social Security Privatization," it was really a plan to give trillions of dollars of investments to Wall Street. Social Security participants would go from a secure guaranteed (yes, it's both secure and guaranteed) real pension to a risky and expensive individual investment plan. The voters saw the folly and in no uncertain terms, said no!

We are not condemning 401(k)s. Many managers are honest and they offer a valuable individual saving tool, but it's not a good substitute for real pensions. Nevertheless, the trend to kill real pensions continues apace, and their sights are aimed directly at the largest remaining source of real pensions: public employees.

Which brings us to the second reason: Power. Since corporate policy affects a company's performance, public corporations must allow stockholders to vote at stockholder meetings at least annually. Stockholders cast votes based on the number and type of shares they own.

It should be no surprise that small investors have little or no impact on corporate policy. But, like a union, a large group of stockholders can assert significant influence. Institutional investors do just that, much to the consternation of corporation's chief operating officers, who are used to making decisions with little or no interference from a largely docile board of directors (usually handsomely paid) and powerless stockholders.

American workers have suffered under the policies of CEOs who live to satisfy stockholders by driving stock prices up, often sacrificing the long term viability they are paid millions to manage. Decisions to pollute, privatize and move work abroad are all made with an eye on the stock price. No longer do corporations plan for the long term. Instead they cut corners, cut jobs, cut quality, all to boost stock prices.

The practices can lead to the demise of the company, so why do it? Now it's time to follow the money.

Stories abound on CEO pay. Today, it is not at all unusual for a CEO to make tens of millions of dollars annually. It is not unusual for a CEO to have a guaranteed severance package worth hundreds of millions, *and a real pension!* There is one entity that is aggressively challenging this grossly excessive pay: Institutional investors. Bingo!

Pension plan managers participate in stockholder meetings, not as a single outraged American with a dozen stocks, but as a major stockholder. They object to overly generous CEO compensation plans, companies that support tyrants, companies that pollute the air and water. No one should be surprised that the American business community is creating myths about real pension plans. They know they cannot defend their greedy ways as good for the company or for America for this simple reason: The policies of the institutional investors are good business.

Studies have repeatedly shown the policies the institutional investors encourage actually have a positive effect on investments. The good policies the institutional investors fight for are better all around, but self interest is a powerful motivator for the CEOs. Real, properly funded pensions cost only 25¢ on the dollar for real lifetime security; why wouldn't a CEO insist on a real pension?

In the interest of protecting public employee pensions and the long term quality of America's industrial and business structure, public employees must stand firm against the pressure tactics of employers who succumb to the pressure of business and try to take real pensions away.

Peter Thor, Council 4's Director of Policy & Planning, authored this article. His examination of pensions will continue in the next 4-Word.

Council 4: Preparing Tomorrow's Workforce Today

For 12-weeks, beginning in March 2008, Council 4 participated in Project WORK (Work Opportunities and Real Knowledge), a youth program operated by Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) of New Britain and funded by Capital Workforce Partners, Inc.

The work experience program, designed to prepare young people for today's workforce, puts trainees through a 10-week training period. The program then places the trainees with various industries and governmental agencies and provides guidance and subsidized salaries.

Trainee Isabel Torres of New Britain tackled special projects for Council 4's Strategic Information Services (SIS) including database entry, filing, photocopying, faxing, and scanning documents using various software including Word, Excel and Access. She even got to try out a technology most young people have never seen, the IBM Selectric typewriter.



According to Renee B. Knight, Coordinator of Youth Programs at OIC of New Britain, Project WORK, "provides a real-world employment experience and those who participate will increase their knowledge of the world of work and improve their employment competencies."

SIS Technical Information Coordinator, Carla D. Simmons supervised Isabel during her tenure at Council 4. "SIS really benefited from this program at least as much as Isabel," Simmons said. "I actually think we got the best of the deal. She works really hard and is intelligent, dependable and is eager to learn."

SIS Research Assistants Dawn Daigle and Barbara Williams agree. "It will be a shame to see her go," Daigle said. "It's been a pleasure working with a young person dedicated to taking on the challenges and demands of the working world. She has become part of the team."

Added Williams: "I'll miss Isabel. She always brought an energy and eagerness into work that was contagious. She'll do very well with whatever she decides to do."

Isabel will be continuing her studies at New Britain High School in the fall.

Council 4 Members Attend AFL-CIO Summer School



Members of Council 4 local unions from around the state gathered at Storrs, CT this summer for the annual AFL-CIO Summer School. Participants spent an intensive week learning how to prepare and present arbitration cases. Alison Dickey (Local 1186), Cheryl Drolet (Local 538) and Garland Parker, Jr. (Local 991) each won a Council 4 scholarship to attend the AFL-CIO Summer School.

Remembering “Skip” Garland



Council 4 members honored the memory state correction officer Wender “Skip” Garland of Local 387 by raising money to ensure a decent funeral.

Garland died on July 2, but with his estate tied up in probate, Local 387 spearheaded a benefit breakfast and cookout at Cheshire Correctional Institution to provide up-front funds for Garland’s funeral. Garland was a 19-year employee of the Department of Correction, a dedicated union member and a Marine veteran.

“On behalf of Local 387, I want to thank all the Council 4 unions and members for their outpouring of support in Skip’s memory,” Local 387 President David Moffa said. “We not only provided Skip with the dignified burial he deserved, but we raised enough money to launch a memorial fund in his honor.”

Aramark Expelled from New Haven Schools

As New Haven Public School’s fiscal year came to an end, so did their more than 12-year relationship with the private contractor Aramark -- thanks in large part to a community campaign launched by New Haven school employees.

On June 23, Superintendent Reginald Mayor announced that Aramark’s contract for school facilities maintenance had been terminated, ending an era of costly mismanagement and anti-union activity. This was welcome news to public service workers pressing for an end to New Haven’s dealings with Aramark.

“Firing Aramark was the right thing to do for our students and our schools” said Local 287 President Robert Montuori, whose union represents 200 school custodial and maintenance workers. “It’s a step in the right direction.”

Local 287 and Council 4, along with the SEIU and UNITE-HERE unions in New Haven, campaigned for Aramark’s expulsion from both food service and facilities maintenance, contending the private company compromised students’ safety and health in its chase for excessive profit.

While the school administration is bringing food service in-house, they hired Trumbull, CT-based AFB Inc., to oversee facilities maintenance for a year. School officials claimed that bringing both food and facilities in-house was simply too much to accomplish in one year.

Local 287 members say no middle man is needed and will continue the push for self-management.

“Just let us do our jobs,” is the way custodian George Daddio put it in a report on Aramark’s failures that Council 4 prepared for the New Haven Board of Education

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

Local 2663 Members Help Reform Juvenile Training School

Members of Council 4 Local 2663 who work at the Connecticut Juvenile Training School (CJTS) in Middletown have been watchdogs for change since the facility opened in 2001, speaking out for safe and secure residential programming to serve adjudicated youth.



Channel 3’s Eric Parker interviews CJTS employees Brian Goralski of Council 4 Local 2663 and Paula Dillon of CSEA/SEIU Local 2001.

So they welcomed the formal resolution of a five-year-old sexual harassment complaint against the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

In a decision issued July 1, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) found DCF failed to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments Act, the law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, in programs operated by recipients of federal financial assistance.

OCR required DCF and USD to enter into a monitoring and reporting agreement as to how they will remedy those Title IX violations and establish clear guidelines for reporting and responding to sexual harassment claims.

The OCR ruling came in response to a complaint filed July 28, 2003 by more than 150 employees at CJTS, who alleged that the employer fostered a hostile and unsafe work environment by failing to address reports of sexual assaults and sexual harassment (both student-on-staff and student-on-student).

Local 2663’s Brian Goralski, a youth service officer and chief steward at CJTS said, “The OCR’s ruling sends a strong message to the agency that it must create a safe, consistent school environment for staff and residents alike.”

Candidates Seek Council 4 Endorsements for Nov. Election



Sen. Sam Caligiuri (R-Waterbury/Cheshire/Southington), at head of table, is interviewed by members of the Council 4 PEOPLE Steering Committee.

Caligiuri has been recommended for our union’s endorsement in the November election. Click on www.council4.org to learn more about the endorsement process and which candidates have received our union’s endorsement for the November election.

Legislative Task Force To Examine Prison Assaults

Flanked by member of Council 4's NP-4 State Corrections Bargaining Unit, Connecticut House Speaker James Amann announced the formation of a new task force charged with developing ways to reduce prison assaults.

That's a welcome news for front-line workers like Brett Owen of Local 1565, a 17-year veteran of the Department of Correction. "I've had altercations with inmates, and I've been outnumbered 30-1," Owen said. "Of course you always fear for your life."



Brett Owen of Local 1565 speaks on prison safety. Standing next to him is House Speaker Jim Amann. Behind Owen, from left, Local 391 President Jon Pepe, Deputy Speaker Chris Donovan (D-Meriden) and State Rep. Kathleen Tallarita (D-Enfield).

In launching the task force, Amann said that corrections officers might have the toughest jobs in state government.

"We have a responsibility to ensure that they have the best resources and tools to do their job and the safest possible working conditions," said Amann, D-Milford, during a July 24 press conference at the State Capitol.

Legislators sped up plans for the task force after an inmate serving 37 years for felony murder attacked two officers at Corrigan-Radgowski Correctional Center in Uncasville.

"[The officers] suffered puncture wounds to the neck, facial areas and knee injuries," said Owen, who works at Corrigan. "But the worst injury was the traumatic nature of it."

Prison overcrowding, combined with lower-than-acceptable staffing levels, has made conditions more volatile throughout Connecticut's prisons. In the past year, the prison population has grown from 18,900 to nearly 19,500.

Correction officers have reported increased incidents of assault, including one in which an officer suffered a broken nose, cheek bone and eye socket, and another in which an inmate hurled feces at a correction officer.

HCAN: The Time Is Now

Health Care for America Now is a national grassroots campaign organizing millions of Americans to win a guarantee of quality, affordable health care for all. AFSCME has joined with other labor unions such as UFCW and SEIU, and community groups from ACORN to MoveOn.org to launch this campaign.

Council 4 has helped organize HCAN events in Connecticut. We're bringing together community organizers, nurses, doctors, small business owners, faith-based groups, organizations of people of color, and seniors who believe it's time we had an American solution that provides quality, affordable health care for everyone.

We're offering a bold new solution that gives you real choice and a guarantee of quality coverage you can afford: keep your current private insurance plan, pick a new private insurance plan, or join a public health insurance plan. To learn more about the campaign, visit <http://healthcareforamericanow.org/>

State Clerical Members Lobby Legislators at Capitol



Betty Miller, left, and Michelle Keefe, center, of Local 610 (State Clerical Administrative Clerical) met with Rep. Betsy Ritter (D-Waterford) during Council 4's annual Lobby Day. Nearly 200 Council 4 members like Miller and Keefe lobbied on healthcare, funding for cities and towns and other issues affecting working families.

Enfield BOE Rejects Privatization and Yankee Institute Claims

Members of the Enfield Board of Education soundly rejected efforts to outsource the work of school custodians represented by Council 4 Local 1303-046.

Board members debated an external audit committee report driven by the Yankee Institute, an extreme right-wing, anti-union and pro-privatization outfit based in Hartford at Trinity College. The audit committee's recommendations included outsourcing custodial operations – an idea that gained little if any support.

"I'm fully behind the custodial staff," said Tom Arnone, a Democrat on the Enfield Board of Education.

"It would take a tremendous business argument to me that we should outsource custodians," said Board of Education chairmen Andre Greco, a Republican.

Dressed in green AFSCME T-shirts, Local 1303 members turned out for board meetings and expressed opposition to outsourcing, emphasizing that 48 of the 60 custodians are Enfield residents.

Local Vice President Sandy Manoni, who works as a night custodian at Parkman Elementary School, told Board members she is

entrusted with keeping her school clean and safe for students: "We're part of the community. We care about the kids and the quality of our schools. And we're a good bargain," she said.



Hartford Workers, Retirees Protest Insurance Hikes



Pictured, from left, Local 566 retiree Marie Ciccarelli, her husband Albert and Local 566 Executive Board member Joan Sirois.

The dog days of summer have taken on a whole new meaning for Hartford school retirees.

Just ask Marie Ciccarelli, a retired school cafeteria worker and former member of Council 4 Local 566. She is among the many retired city and board of education workers whose retiree insurance premium more than doubled (and in some cases tripled).

Ciccarelli received a letter notifying her that her premium cost jumped from \$286 a month to \$630 a month — nearly \$200 more than her \$452 monthly pension.

“It’s depressing. My husband and I planned for retirement. Now we have to dip into our small savings to make up the difference,” Ciccarelli said.

Custodians, cafeteria workers, teachers, paraprofessionals and school secretaries were up in arms and seeking answers, not to mention relief from the draconian rate hike.

With help from Connecticut Working Families Party, union members from Council 4 and AFT Connecticut mobilized for a demonstration prior to Hartford City Council meeting July 14. There, dozens of residents testified about the damage caused by school layoffs and retiree health insurance premium hikes.

“It’s depressing. My husband and I planned for retirement. Now we have to dip into our small savings to make up the difference.”

The City Council then passed a resolution creating a moratorium on any changes to municipal retirees’ healthcare plans until September and urging the Board of Education to do the same for its employees.

Council members Larry Deutsch and Luis Cotto led the successful effort to pass the moratorium on health insurance increases. Deutsch and Cotto are members of the Working Families Party, which Council 4 helped to found.

But the resolution is not binding on the Board of Education, so active and retired employees have pledged to continue fighting publicly and behind the scenes to fix the insurance problem.

At press time, workers and retirees were planning to march on the residence of School Superintendent Stephen Adamowski to protest the insurance mess as well as the layoff of more than 30 school custodians at the end of the 2007-2008 academic year.

AFSCME 1303 Announces Student Scholarship Winners

AFSCME Local 1303 is pleased to announce the following students have each been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship towards their college educations:

Kaitlyn McBryde, daughter of Kathleen McBryde (Chapter 1303-209 Waterford Board of Education Paraprofessionals) will attend Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, CT

Erin Cunningham, daughter of Sean Cunningham, (Chapter 1303-061 West Hartford Board of Education Maintenance & Repair) will attend Siena College in Loudonville, NY

Meghan Crosby, daughter of Mary C. Crosby, (Chapter 1303-314 Guilford Board of Education Nurses) will attend Boston College in Chestnut Hill, MA

Elizabeth K. Smith, daughter of Susan B. Smith (Chapter 1303-140 Southington Board of Education Nurses) will attend Messiah College in Grantham, PA

Samantha A. Neri, daughter of Georgiann Neri (Chapter 1303-278 Old Saybrook Town Employees) will attend Assumption College in Worcester, MA

Elliot Clark son of Nancy Kuhn-Clark (Chapter 1303-157 Westport Public Library Professionals) will attend Emory University in Atlanta, GA

Edward Rowe, son of Karen Rowe (Chapter 1303-146 Bethel Board of Education Secretaries) will attend Manhattan College in Riverdale, NY

Thomas Scanlon, son of Nancy Scanlon (Chapter 1303-305 New Fairfield Free Public Library Employees) will attend Western Connecticut State University in Danbury, CT.

BJ’s Wholesale Club Has A Special Offer for Council 4 Members



For a limited time, Council 4 members can get an exclusive discount on a membership from BJ’s Wholesale Club:

- **Membership discount of \$35** -- a \$10 savings on the regular membership fee.
- **Membership duration extended to 15 months** -- *That’s 3 free months!*
- **Rewards membership: \$70 for 15 months** -- a \$10 savings so you can save even more on groceries & filling up your tank.

THREE GREAT REASONS TO JOIN:

1. Get \$10 Off Our \$45 Annual Membership Fee
2. Three additional months of membership!
3. Free Second Household Membership Card

This special offer is not available at any BJ’s location or BJ’s online site. If you are a Council 4 union member, you can download the BJ’s application form at our union’s website (www.council4.org). Just fill out the application and mail with your payment by Sept. 15, 2008 to:

*BJ’s Wholesale Club
125 Cross Rd., Waterford Ct. 06385
Attn: Betsy Wanstall*

Questions call Betsy @ (860) 442-6963

You will receive activation forms in the mail. Renewal memberships will not receive new cards; your expiration dates will be extended 15 months.

Local Union Meetings

Local 196: Oct. 21, 2008, 6 p.m., Local 196 Union Office, 705 North Mountain Rd., Newington, CT.

Local 269: Sept. 9, 2008, 7 p.m., Hamden Dept. of Labor, 37 Marne St., Hamden, CT. Agenda: Regular order of business.

Local 318: Sept. 23, 2008, at 5:00 p.m., Local Union Office, Stepney Place, Rocky Hill, CT. Agenda: Regular order of business.

Local 355: October 2, 2008, 5:30 p.m. at Manchester Community College. Agenda: Election of 1 trustee position and regular order of business.

Local 387: Sept. 4, 2008, 7 p.m., Prospect VFW. Regular order of business. Next meeting: Oct. 2, 2008.

Local 610: Oct. 21, 2008, 5:30 p.m., DMHAS Southeastern Mental Health Authority. Agenda: Election of (1) Trustee and regular order of business.

Local 714: Nov. 10, 2008, 6:30 p.m., Council 4, 444 East Main St., New Britain, CT. Agenda: Regular order of business.

Local 1303-132: Sept. 20, 2008, 9:30 a.m., Council 4, 444 East Main St., New Britain, CT. Agenda: Regular order of business.

Local 2663: Sept. 18, 2008, 6:30 p.m., Council 4, 444 East Main St., New Britain, CT. Agenda: Regular order of business.

Council 4 Retirees Chapter: Sept. 16, 2008, 10:00 a.m., Council 4 Conference Room, 444 East Main St., New Britain, CT.

Happy Birthday, Medicare...and Many More

On July 30, working people across the country celebrated the 43rd birthday of Medicare with events in Connecticut and nationwide.

President Lyndon Johnson signed Medicare into law on July 30, 1965 to provide access to quality, affordable health care for older Americans. Since then, Medicare has been a cornerstone of the health and security of America's seniors. Today, some 44 million Americans depend on Medicare for health care benefits.

But the program has been under relentless attack by congressional Republicans and the Bush administration. Congress recently overrode President Bush's veto of a bill that would strengthen Medicare for seniors. Passage of the bill means the pending cuts in payments to doctors who treat Medicare patients have been stopped. Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), didn't show up for the vote. Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.) voted in support of America's seniors.

Unions Helping Their Community: Milford Local 3322



The 2008 Community Action/Involvement Committee of Local 3322 chose to make the following donations on behalf of the Milford Employees Association, Local 3322: \$500 to Milford's Rape Crisis Center; \$500 to Milford's Promise, a collaborative network that builds upon the power of the community to help fulfill five promises to every young person: caring adults, safe places, healthy starts, marketable skills and opportunities to serve; \$250 to the Milford Historical Society and \$250 to the Milford Fine Arts Council. This is the presentation of the MEA check to Milford's Promise co-president Barbara Walsh. Pictured from left: Lois Hoory, 2nd VP; Barbara Walsh; Glenn Behrle, MEA President; and Linda Catino, MEA Treasurer.

Council 4

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