

LOCAL 3

JULY–AUGUST 2011

STOREWORKER NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION LOCAL 3 UNITED STOREWORKERS RWDSU/UFCW

Union Contract Preparation

Local 3 President Cassandra A. Berrocal met with members of the Local Executive Board several times during the summer months to begin preparations for the 2012 Contract expiration. The turmoil and uncertainty caused by the current lingering economic crisis was a major subject of discussion.

Berrocal pointed out that the major victory achieved by RWDSU Local 1-5 will be a compelling factor. Members of the Board agreed that the effect of the current ADR evaluating system particularly the negative climate created in the membership by the unfair applications of some of the ADR ratings.

Every Board member included the increasing high cost of health care both in the premiums and in the deductibles, as well as the co-pays and co-insurance established by the insurance company.

One of the most important points on the agenda is that nation-wide, 95% of workers in department stores do not have union coverage. Therefore, they do not have a “voice at work.” Another important item is the fact that the trend in the retail industry is to hire more part timers who are having a hard time struggling to survive because they do not have a union.

Berrocal told the Board that they will be meeting on a continuing basis to formalize and finalized the proposals that will be presented to the Membership for approval.



Local 3 Executive Board

Economy Affects All Workers

Federal Government statistics support public feeling that working people in America are suffering to a greater degree than anyone else. Workers, particularly the working poor who earn only the Federal Minimum Wage and immigrant workers who are paid less than the Federal Minimum Wage have been suffering since the financial debacle of 2008.

The Local 3 United Storeworkers Union Contract with Bloomingdale's/Macy's Inc. was negotiated early in 2008 before the full impact of the financial scandal hit. The agreement reached with Management by the Union Negotiating Committee established a general wage increase in each of the three (3) years of the Union Contract for all hourly paid employees. The Union Contract also guarantees a continuation of the full force of the rights and benefits that have been won by the Union since the beginning in 1938.

Despite the financial turmoil, the Local 1-S workers at Macy's NY recently signed a new contract with Macy's/Macy's Inc. that also guarantees general wage increases in each year of the contract.

Long service union members who have been through various contractual struggles can attest to the fact that the union has made progress since 1938 because the membership has been united in support of the Union Leadership's program to improve the wages and the terms and conditions of employment in unionized stores. This union struggle has benefited every worker employed by a department store and other retail establishments. The Management in non-union stores seeks to keep their employees workers from joining a union by making some temporary improvements whenever a union starts an organizing drive.

New union employees of Bloomingdale's 59th Street are introduced to the Union and informed of the benefits they will receive during union orientation when they are first hired. Most new employees know little or nothing about the achievements of organized labor and are made aware of the union movement and its benefits during the Union orientation session when they are hired at Bloomingdale's.

Working people in America didn't have the right to join a union in 1935 when Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act. At that time, people joined unions in droves seeking to improve their standard of living and reaching to achieve the American dream. Congress also passed the Fair Labor Standards Act establishing a federal minimum wage applicable in every state in the nation.

The rights and benefits negotiated by unions have become the goal of every worker in America. Paid vacations and other paid time off such as

holiday pay, sick leave days, pensions, health care coverage and maternity leave were all created by the union movement as part of making improvements in the lives of working people. While union members take these benefits for granted there are still millions of working people in non-union shops who do not receive any of these benefits.

The first Local 3 United Storeworkers Union contract with Bloomingdale's was signed in 1938. It established guaranteed minimum rates of pay, a vacation schedule and a grievance procedure that ends with arbitration. The contract signed in 1950 established maternity leave and disability benefits more than 20 years before these benefits became mandated by law.

The privilege of belonging to a union where a union contract guarantees workers' rights and benefits must be extended to millions of workers including immigrant workers who suffer on a daily basis at the hands of greedy and unscrupulous employers. Union members must guard their union contract and stand solidly united in support of their union leadership in order to protect their rights and benefits and to make additional improvements in the terms and conditions of employment.

Local 3 Retirees Meeting

Wednesday, September 28th at 11:00 A.M.

RWDSU Local 1-S Headquarters

140 West 31st Street (Between 6th & 7th Aves.)

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United Storeworkers, RWDSU/UFCW
29-27 41st Ave. L. I. City, NY 11101
Telephone: (212) 371-6230

President: Cassandra A. Berrocal
Sec.-Treas.: Shaun Kavanagh
Recorder: Costello Dash

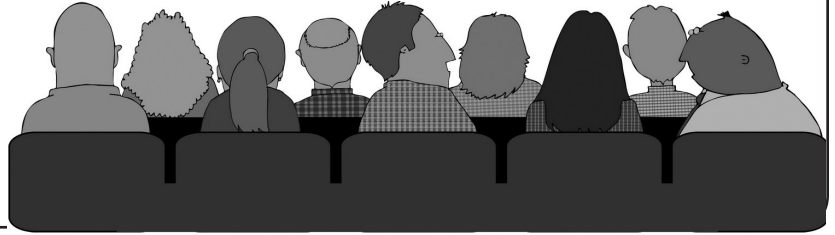
Contributions on topics of interest to members of the Union are invited. Correspondence should be sent to the address above.

Local 3 Membership Meeting

Tuesday, September 20th at 4:30 P.M., 5:30 P.M. and 6:30 P.M.

All Saints Episcopal Church

230 East 60th Street (Between 2nd & 3rd Aves.)



You Have Choices

For the first time in history, Congress and a President have passed a law that recognizes the need to provide health care for all. In 1966 the controversies regarding health care coverage for older Americans were settled with the passing of the law that provides health care coverage for those who are 65 or older. The concept of health care for working people was created by organized labor. Now, we are facing a situation where health care has become a for profit industry just like manufacturing automobiles. The 2011 enrollment numbers in the current health care plan shows that over a thousand Local 3 members signed up for coverage in Cigna or Essential Care. It is important that every Local 3 member who is paying for health care coverage takes advantage of the free programs provided by the insurers according to law such as:

- Blood pressure, diabetes, and cholesterol tests
- Many cancer screenings, including mammograms and colonoscopies
- Counseling on such topics as quitting smoking, losing weight, eating healthy, treating depression and reducing alcohol use
- Routine vaccinations against diseases such as measles, polio or meningitis
- Flu and pneumonia shots
- Counseling, screening, and vaccines to ensure healthy pregnancies
- Regular well-baby and well-child visits, from birth to age 21
- Local 3 members who are enrolled in Cigna or are entitled to additional benefits which are provided by the SWSP such as:
- The SWSP pays 54% of the total weekly health care premiums.
- Podiatry benefit: \$20 co-payment per visit for up to 8 visits in each calendar year for removal of corns and calluses and toe nail clipping (member only)
- Optical benefits: SWSP payment towards exam and one (1) pair of eyeglasses per year, for member only, from participating providers
- Death benefits \$3000.00 to your designated beneficiary

- Burial plots at cost in Rose Hills Memorial Cemetery, in Putnam County and Beth Israel Memorial Park, Iselin, NJ

AFTER ONE YEAR OF EMPLOYMENT EVERY LOCAL 3 MEMBER IS ENTITLED TO RECEIVE SICK LEAVE DAYS FROM THE STOREWORKERS SECURITY PLAN.

Grandfathered Participants: Local 3 members covered by the Plan as of 10/10/08 are entitled to reimbursement of up to \$600 towards the deductible each Plan year for member only. Part time Local 3 members who were covered by the SWSP on 10/10/08 are entitled to continue participation in any health care plan.

Health care coverage for Americans continues to be an important part of the political agenda. Corporations balk at paying the full cost of health care coverage while 80% of the workers throughout the country cannot afford the rising cost of health care coverage. Union members throughout the country are standing firm to include health care costs as part of their wage package. Local 3 members will have to decide next year what course of action to take in order to protect their rights and benefits.

LONG ISLAND CITY, NY 11101
29-27 41st Avenue, Suite 400
RWDSU/UFCW
UNITED STOREWORKERS
LOCAL 3

COMMENTARY



by Berrocal & Kavanagh

The summer months have been beautiful but very busy for the Local 3 leadership. Working people throughout the country have been involved in discussions regarding various important issues.

There is the concern that the current economic situation may cause a shift to “the right.” This feeling is supported by the moves of several state governors who want to strip working people of the right to engage in collective bargaining.

The turbulence in Wisconsin caused by the governor’s proposal to cut workers collective bargaining rights epitomizes the most drastic situation.

America was built by the sweat of immigrant workers who trekked across the Nation and settled in the wilderness to form a nation that proclaims freedom and liberty for all. The founding fathers of 1776 wrote a constitution that guarantees certain inalienable rights. True, it took

struggle and determination and the abolishment of slavery to form a more perfect union. Also true, the struggle against anti-Semitism and the Civil Rights struggle helped to create a better world. However there are those who would have us go backwards instead of forward.

The 2012 Presidential election will be a matter of finding a way for all segments of society to co-exist and help each other. Every Local 3 member is urged to register early in the game to vote so that working people will have a place in the society they helped create.

To guarantee that the leadership reflects the will of the workers, Union Stewards must be elected where there are vacancies. Members must attend membership meetings when they are called so that their voices can be heard.

In Union Solidarity