

“Fair Trade guarantees farmers \$1.26 per pound—enough to feed their families, and send their kids to school instead of into the fields.”
—Martin Sheen, Actor, Activist, Coffee Drinker

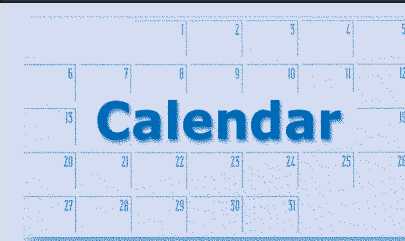
Coffee *continued*



While it costs around 75 cents to produce a pound of coffee, small family farmers are now receiving an average of 25 cents per pound. The fair trade coffee price is set at \$1.26 cents per pound. (Transfair USA, a non-profit foundation, ensures that fair trade certified money goes to the coffee growers and that the growers are following environmentally safe, sustainable development of the land.)

One Peruvian coffee farmer visited the Pacific Northwest this September to tell how fair trade has helped his family and his community. Before the 1,500 farmers in his coop joined the fair trade system, most of their children only finished fifth grade. With fair trade prices for their coffee crops, now most of their kids finish high school, and about 30 are studying at universities!

Buy fair trade! Make sure it says *Fair Trade* (not *Free Trade*), and that it's Certified (see logo at right). You can find it at your local PCC grocery stores (in Fremont, Greenlake, Issaquah, Kirkland, Seward Park, View Ridge, and West Seattle) or online from Transfair USA: www.transfairusa.org and Equal Exchange: www.equalexchange.org.



WED., FEB. 26 MEETINGS:
PAC, 5:30 p.m., Hall 6
New Member Orientation
 5:30 p.m., Rm. 226
Membership Meeting
 6:15 p.m., Hall 6, Seattle Labor Temple, 2800 First Avenue (between Clay & Broad Sts.) Free parking (for Membership Meeting only) under the new Ellington Condos. On the monitor by the garage door, punch in: *011213#. *Election for KCLC will be in March.*

Shop Steward Training in Everett, March 1, 8:30–3:00:
 call 1-800-600-2433 to reserve your spot.

Political Action Committee (PAC) Garage Sale: One person's junk is another's treasure, so start saving those treasures you no longer want for the OPEIU PAC Garage Sale in late spring.

Office and Professional Employees International Union Local 8
 Seattle Labor Temple
 2800 First Avenue, Room 304
 Seattle, WA 98121-1114
 Tel: 206 441 8880
 1 800 600 2433
 Fax: 206 441 0207
opeiu8@igc.org
www.opeiu8.org

What's the real cost of your coffee?

By Heather Golden, OPEIU Intern

Did you know that coffee is the world's second most traded commodity, second only to oil? Coffee production involves 100 million people in the world. Right now, coffee prices for farmers are at their lowest price in history. Millions of small coffee farmers and coffee workers around the globe, from Indonesia to Peru, are now starving as a result of the coffee crisis. In record numbers, small family farmers are abandoning their coffee farms to look for work in cities and in other countries as undocumented immigrants. Some are turning to the illegal coca plant for income that will save their families. The coffee crisis holds important implications for the labor movement, and as coffee



drinkers and supportive union members, we can make a difference!

Fair trade certified coffee is an alternative to the suffering of millions of small family farmers in the world. What is fair trade? Fair trade is a trade system whereby farmers receive a fair market price for their coffee beans by forming democratically run cooperatives to get certified as fair trade coops. These cooperatives invest the money received from fair trade coffee sales into areas they decide upon, such as education, healthcare and housing for their communities. Furthermore, fair trade coffee is largely grown using sustainable methods, such as organic farming and shade grown methods that protect the environment. *(continued on page 4)*



Local 8 members march for peace on Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Executive Board

Verlene Wilder
President
Marie Cook
Vice President
Cindy Schu
Secretary-Treasurer
Sylvia Trepp
Recording Secretary
Lucinda Clark
Tommy McLean
Sally Mejia
John Monahan
Kerry Warner
Dave Westphal
Karen White

Staff

Suzanne Mode
Business Manager
Cindy Schu
Organizing Director
Shelby Mooney
Organizer
Heather Golden
Organizing Intern
Ligia Farfán
Union Representative
Mary Maloy
Union Representative
Shelley Pinckney
Union Representative
Benita Hyder
Union Representative
Colleen Shelton
Office Manager
Libby Alejandro
Administrative Secretary
Betty Devereaux
Secretary/Receptionist
Nora Galvin
Secretary/Desktop Publisher
Mary Silver
Billing Clerk

STATE OF THE UNION

The Focus for 2003 is Member Activism

By Suzanne Mode, Business Manager & Cindy Schu, Organizing Director/Secretary-Treasurer

Many challenges face us as 2003 begins. The threat of an unjustified war, economic policies that favor the very rich, an assault on our environment, a health care crisis that will get worse before it gets better will all demand our attention and commitment. Global issues combine with our own personal struggles that might involve caring for our aging parents, worrying about job security, and finding time just to enjoy life.

With so many issues pulling us in all directions, it's sometimes hard to stay focused on immediate goals. But to build a strong community within our Local 8 we still must work toward our immediate goals as well as our broader commitments.

We should take great comfort in being union members. Through our union we have protections and rights that many non-union workers don't have and we must fight to not let these standards erode. We can do that with an active, involved membership.

Taking the results of the Membership Survey done in 2002 in which over 1,000 of you participated and in coordination with our Executive Board and staff, we have a plan to guide us through this year:

- **More Shop Steward/Activist Trainings** will be offered that include "experts" from the community but also more Steward participation in presenting trainings.
- **Strong Contract Campaigns** that involve many members as part of the Bargaining Support Teams. Half of our membership will be in contract negotiations this year. Local 8 will have organizing staff dedicated to assist members if we need to take our campaigns in the community to fight for union contract standards.

- **Organize New Members** in areas that will benefit our existing members, improve industry standards, give us more bargaining power and help those who need a union most. We have targeted 2-3 organizing campaigns for this year.



- **A New Local 8 Web Site** to improve communication about what's going on in the Union and serve as a great organizing tool. We hope to "go live" by March.
- **A Local 8 Recognition Event** will take place sometime this year to honor our members, stewards and activists. The date for the first Planning Committee will be announced at the February Membership Meeting.
- **A Statewide Planning Session** will be organized to look at how members from all over the state, not just the Seattle area, get represented and have a voice in union decisions. Sign up to get involved at the February Membership Meeting.

- **More Union Rep Workplace Visitations** will happen once we become fully staffed.
- **Political Action** to convince the Legislature to give Home Care Workers a living wage, to stop cuts to federally funding housing programs and to ensure politicians who are labor friendly get elected.
- **A Budget** that responds to the needs of our membership this year and leaves reserves at the end of the year so that we can always be in a position to take on a fight when we must.

See you at the February Membership Meeting, where there will be sign-up sheets for you to volunteer and get involved in making your Union strong!

M E M B E R S I N A C T I O N

KING COUNTY DEPT. OF ASSESSMENTS VICTORIES!

At least two OPEIU Local 8 members at King County will receive placement in an upgraded job classification and some back pay as settlement to an appeal started over 5 years ago. These reclassifications mean moving to a higher pay range and increased pension contributions for **Daniel Castoriano** and **Deloris Roberts**. Perseverance and Union support paid off!



FREMONT HOMECARE WORKERS ADD ANOTHER HOLIDAY

Fremont Public Association Homecare workers can soon be seen "floating" on a paid day off as an agreement has been reached with FPA for home care workers to have a floating holiday, thanks to bargaining team members **David Westphal**, **Bernice Meyer**, **Bobbi Williams** and **Jean Honka**. Members will have the opportunity to ratify this great new change soon.

OLYCAP STEWARDS STAND STRONG

Shop Stewards met with management last week to protest the reduction in mileage reimbursement being "shared" with Home Care Workers. This week they rallied again to take their protest directly to the OlyCAP Meeting. **JoAnne Kaye** stood and read a very pointed letter, with support by **Pat Hutto**, **Trish Hutto** and **Sherry Merryman**. "We stood our ground and we're not backing down!" said **Pat Hutto**.



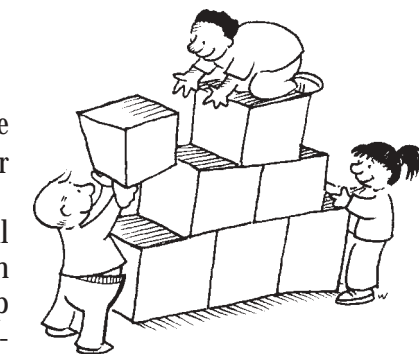
Pat Hutto, Trish Hutto, Sherry Merryman and JoAnne Kaye showing union solidarity.

Small Steps Can Build our Union

By **Shannon Salinas**, Shop Steward at Seattle Housing Authority and **Shelby Mooney**, Organizer

Why is it important to build our Union? Because we have strength in numbers. The higher our union density within similar industries we work in, the stronger contracts we can negotiate.

We recognize we are all busy, but there are small steps we all can take to do outreach to non-unionized workers who work in similar industries. Here are some small steps you can do to help build our Union. When opportunities arise to talk about your workplace, make sure you mention that your workplace is Union. This is a great time to talk about the benefits you have gained as a Union member, a new contract you just negotiated or an issue that got resolved through your Union. When you are participating in community activities and events be sure to let your OPEIU Local 8 colors shine by wearing your Union t-shirt or button. Our participation in community events allows non-union workers see that Union workers care about the issues they care about too. Stay tuned for more small steps in upcoming newsletters.



Sign up for Shop Steward training on March 1:

- New Steward Training
- Creative Grievance Handling
- Solidarity for a Strong Contract
- Family Medical Leave & New Changes to State Law.

Call (206) 441-8880 or 1 (800) 600-2433. Press 0 to speak to the attendant.