



# Local 8 OPEIU Journal

www.opeiu8.org

Vol. 22, No. 1

January 2007

## CALENDAR

### Mon., Jan. 15

- **Martin Luther King Jr. Day March & Rally**, in Seattle (new location) and Olympia. See page 7.

### Wed., Jan. 17

- **American Blackout**, 5:30 p.m., Seattle Labor Temple, Hall 8. Free. See page 6.

### Wed., Jan. 24

- **Membership Meeting**, 6:15 p.m., Hall 6. *Agenda: Budget Review; Nominations of Officers, Executive Board and Election Board*
- **Political Action Committee**, 5:30 p.m., Hall 6.
- **New Member Orientation**, 5:30 p.m., Rm. 244.

### Tues., Feb. 13

- **Deadline for Absentee Ballot requests**

### Wed., Feb. 28

- **Election of Officers at Membership Meeting**

## Notice of 2007 OPEIU Local 8 Nominations and Elections

In accordance with Article 13 of Local 8's Bylaws, this is notification that Nominations and elections will take place as follows:

**JANUARY 24: General Membership Meeting.** Nominations and election of an Election Committee; nominations of Business Manager, President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, Recording Secretary, 11 Executive Board Members\* and 3 alternate Board Members. All are three-year terms. The Business Manager will be an automatic delegate to the International Convention.

**FEBRUARY 13:** Deadline for written requests for mail ballots from Local 8's office. See form on page 8.

**FEBRUARY 28: Election of Officers.** Polls will be open for officer positions from Noon until 7:00 p.m. in the Labor Temple, 2800 First Avenue. Absentee Mail Ballots must be in post office box in time for the morning pickup on February 28. Mail several days in advance to make sure it gets in on time.

**FEBRUARY 28: Nominations and election of two Trustees** will take place at the Membership Meeting. Duties of each office are outlined in Articles 10 and 13 of Local 8's Bylaws.

In order to vote, your dues must be paid through November 2006. To run for office, you must be a member in good standing for 12 months prior to February 28, 2007.



\*NOTE: Four of the Executive Board positions are regional and will be nominated and elected only by members from that region: **two representatives from the North region** (Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, San Juan and Island counties), **one from the South/West region** (Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason, Gray's Harbor, Thurston, Pierce, Pacific, Lewis, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, Clark and Skamania) and **one from the East Region** (all other Washington state counties not mentioned above, excluding King County).

# M E M B E R S . . .

## First Contract Victory at Senior Life Resources

### Executive Board

Verlene Jones

*President*

Marie Cook

*Vice President*

Cindy Schu

*Secretary-Treasurer*

Evelyn Bowles

*Recording Secretary*

Valancy Blackwell

Guy Brook

Brandi Eyerly

Audrey Gunderson

Jaime Martinez

Kellie McGuire

Carmen Paez

Kathi Scott

Kathy Taylor

Karen White

### Staff

Suzanne Mode

*Business Manager*

Cindy Schu

*Organizing Director*

Shelby Mooney

*Organizer*

Ligia Velázquez

*Union Representative*

Mary Maloy

*Union Representative*

Benita Hyder

*Union Representative*

Shannon Halme

*Union Representative*

Paul Bigman

*Union Representative*

Colleen Shelton

*Office Manager*

Libby Alejandro

*Administrative*

*Secretary*

Betty Devereaux

*Secretary/Receptionist*

Nora Galvin

*Secretary/Desktop*

*Publisher*

Mary Silver

*Billing Clerk*

When the nearly 500 Caregivers at Senior Life Resources organized for a Union last year, they hoped for an affordable health plan, paid vacation and sick leave, some paid holidays, seniority step increases and overall, the same standards enjoyed by



other unionized home care workers around the state. And that's just what they got. Workers from all over Eastern Washington, Ellensburg to Clarkston, voted unanimously to approve their new contract. "After surveying our members, and talking to them over these last months, we felt pretty confident about what we needed to achieve at the bargaining table. We feel really great about our new contract and felt we got the respect we deserved from SLR management," stated **Barbara Brennan**, a 15-year employee and member of the bargaining team.

Members of the Bargaining Team included: **DeWayne Avery, Barb Brennan, Patricia Jaime, Laurie Galland, Laura Wampole, Mary Manson, Robin Sullivan**, Union Representative **Benita Hyder** and Organizing Director and negotiator **Cindy Schu**, and other SLR Caregivers.



### *Building Local Union Power*

Pictured above, from left to right, are **Suzanne Mode, Lois Tatum, Kathi Scott, Guy Brook, Evelyn Bowles, OPEIU President Michael Goodwin** in back, **Nancy Wohlforth, Marie Cook, Verlene Wilder, Valerie Steplight, and Cindy Schu.**

Our OPEIU International Union sponsored a Regional Education Conference in San Francisco on *Building Local Union Power*. The topic turned out to be timely, given our 2007 goals of increasing our Membership Action Committee.

# . . . I N A C T I O N

## La Clinica Workers Take a Stand!

The workers at La Clinica Community Health Center in Pasco give new meaning to solidarity. After a grueling six months of fighting management union-busting efforts, workers are finally getting the contract they deserve (*see story in State of the Union*). Shown here is the Union Bargaining Team, from left to right: Margaret Vivero, Josie Lopez, Carolyn Banks, Rick Hernandez, Cathy Kahn, Negotiator and Business Manager Suzanne Mode, Helen Campos and Danny Flores.



## GHC Victory at Eastside: Overtime is Overdue

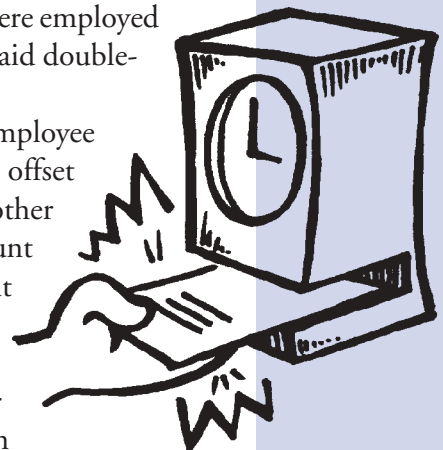
OPEIU Local 8 and Group Health Cooperative have settled a grievance regarding when double-time should be paid to an employee who has worked seven consecutive days. Prior to this settlement, in some instances, GHC paid double-time when an employee worked seven days in a row during the defined GHC workweek (currently Sunday through Saturday, but prior to November 15, 2005, Saturday through Friday).

Local 8's position is that double-time should be paid on the seventh consecutive day worked by an employee regardless of when that seventh day fell in GHC's workweek.

As a part of this settlement with OPEIU, as of October 1, 2006, all OPEIU employees are being paid double-time for all hours worked on the seventh consecutive day that the employees work, whether or not that seventh day also falls on the seventh day of GHC's workweek. In addition, GHC will calculate any back pay due to all Local 8 members who were employed by GHC between November 15, 2004 and October 1, 2006 and were not paid double-time for any hours worked on their seventh consecutive day of work.

The parties also have agreed that any double-time already paid to an employee for having worked seven consecutive days within GHC's workweek will be offset and deducted from any amount due to the employee for having worked any other seven consecutive days. In the event the amount of this offset exceeds the amount due to the employee, GHC reserves the right to recover this excess amount from the employee.

Although we do not have a signed settlement, it is our hope to have a settlement agreed to and signed before year's end. Keep your eyes open for information being sent out in early January with explanations of how you can submit notice that you may be owed money.



# State of the Union

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

We begin 2007 hopeful that recent political changes result in more favorable laws to protect and improve workers' rights, both in the United States and globally, and in ending the devastation in Iraq. Our fight for a more worker-friendly government will go into high gear next year as we prepare for the 2008 elections. Local 8 wants to be prepared to mobilize our members better than ever as we look to the future.

## *Local 8 Members Persevere*

Before outlining Local 8's direction for 2007, we want to take a moment to reflect on the previous year's victories. Clearly this was the year of perseverance for members at several workplaces where we had to overcome difficult and challenging struggles. Maintaining worker solidarity through it all made the difference.

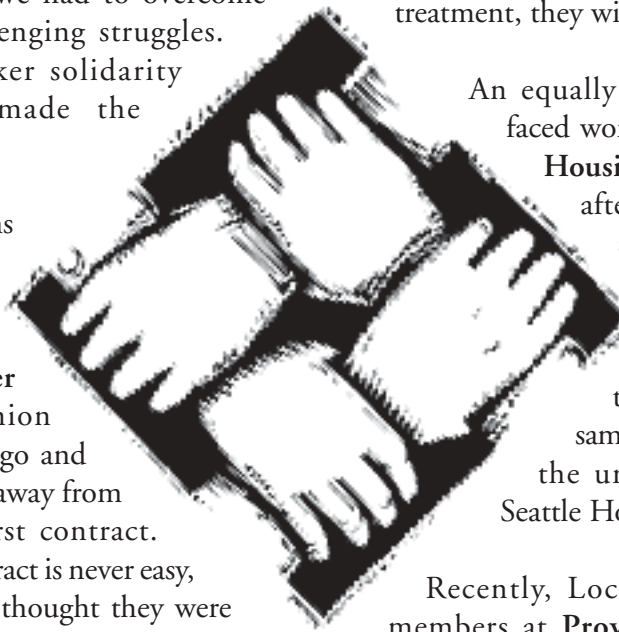
First, congratulations to the nearly 200 workers at **La Clinica Community Health Center** who won their union election two years ago and who now are weeks away from voting on their first contract. Winning a first contract is never easy, but just when they thought they were close to settling the contract nearly a year ago, La Clinica hired a bully for an human resources director who refused to bargain, refused to recognize the union, and refused to honor previously negotiated agreements. In short, he was on a mission to bust their union and didn't care about breaking the law.

After months of this behavior, with the final blow being a huge hike in medical benefit costs, workers said enough. Local 8 sought relief from the National Labor Relations Board and actually got the NLRB to recommend an injunction against the agency for their Unfair Labor Practice charges.

This, along with a community campaign and workers organizing an action before the agency's Executive Board meeting to expose the anti-worker behavior, led the agency finally to change course and honor the bargaining process. Medical benefits got restored and a first contract is nearly ready for a vote. When workers get backing from their Union to stand up to unfair employer treatment, they win.

An equally daunting challenge faced workers at **King County Housing Authority** where, after nearly three years, a first contract was finally won. Workers there can now look forward to working toward the same standards enjoyed by the unionized workers at Seattle Housing Authority.

Recently, Local 8's nearly 1,000 members at **Providence Hospital** Everett fought hard to win a contract that provides guaranteed raises over the next three years in spite of an employer bent on diminishing union power throughout the Providence system. In the years leading up to



our next contract campaign here, we will need to increase our efforts to ensure success.

## *Local 8 Continues to Grow*

Our 800 members at three newly organized home care agencies, **Visiting Nurse Home Care** (Bellingham), **CDM In-Home Care**, and **Senior Life Resources** stayed unified in their efforts to win their first union contracts. Better health benefits, a pay scale with seniority increases and paid time off were the primary issues to be tackled. First contracts are always a challenge, so it's helpful when the union and the employer can maintain a cooperative working relationship and when workers are unified in what they want to achieve at the bargaining table.

Sadly, we had to say goodbye to 150 members at **Visiting Nurse Services Northwest** (Snohomish County) when, after 27 years, the agency decided to no longer provide home care services. Fortunately, in coordination with SEIU and Catholic Community Services, our members at VNS were able to bridge their seniority and most of their benefits by taking union jobs at CCS.

## *Local 8 Expands Union Democracy*

In March 2005, over 50 Local 8 members met from all over the state to decide how to best structure our organization to ensure statewide representation. The group decided to create four new Regional Executive Board positions from the north, south and east parts of the state.

Members approved Local 8 By-Laws changes to reflect the new representation model. A

special mid-term election was held in February 2006 to expand our Executive Board.

## *Local 8 Remains Financially Healthy*

Local 8 finished another year financially healthy although we postponed hiring a Membership Support Representative as planned. We continue to get support through our International Union with an interest-free loan and an organizing subsidy in the form of a per capita rebate. We continue to have a reserve to ensure we can sustain any unforeseen challenges facing our members.

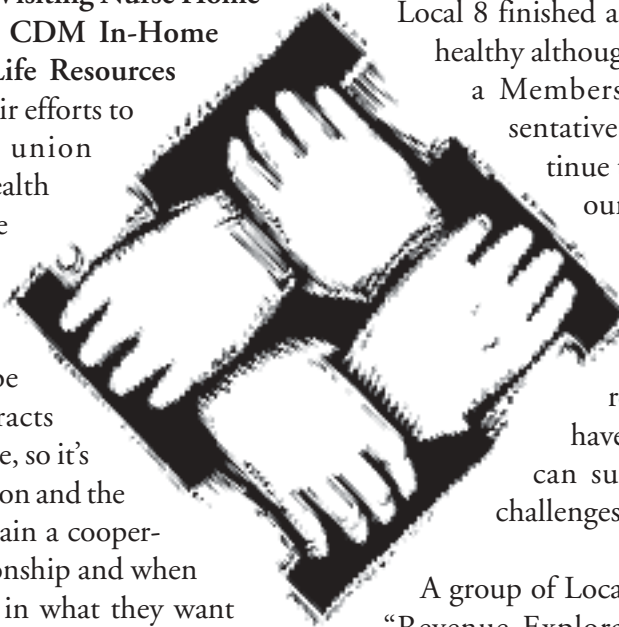
A group of Local 8 members formed a "Revenue Exploration Committee" to review our dues structure in comparison with other unions and to ensure we stay financially stable well into the future. The group will continue to meet in 2007 and report any recommendations to Local 8's Membership.

## *Local 8 in 2007— Strengthening Our Core*

Now that we've put in place the expansion of our Executive Board, it's time to follow up on the Action Plan laid out by the Membership Action Workgroup from our Member Meeting in Tokeland in March 2005.

In 2007 we want to bring on at least one, and hopefully two, Membership Support Representatives (MSRs) to increase union visibility, responsiveness and action in the workplace. The MSR position will only be open to members of Local 8. Watch for the job announcement in the next newsletter.

*(continued on page 7)*



## Paul Bigman, new Union Rep

After a lengthy search, we are proud to announce the hiring of a very experienced Union Representative to replace a Local 8 staff person who moved to Italy last fall.

Paul Bigman has been active in the labor movement for over 30 years, including more than 20 years as a union organizer and representative for several unions



in various part of the country. Most recently, Paul was an International Organizer for seven years with the International Longshore & Warehouse Union (ILWU). Among other workers with whom he's organized or provided representation are pharmacy workers at Chicago's Cook County Hospital, a broad range of Dow Jones employees at The Wall Street Journal and Baron's, and public sector security workers in Alaska and Oregon.

In addition to new organizing, he has led contract negotiations; conducted grievances and arbitrations, membership education and leadership training; and worked on community coalition-building and political action. Paul has been active with Jobs with Justice, serving as Co-Chair of Washington State Jobs with Justice and Western Regional Organizer for the national organization. He also worked briefly as a labor educator with the Labor Education and Research Center at The Evergreen State College.

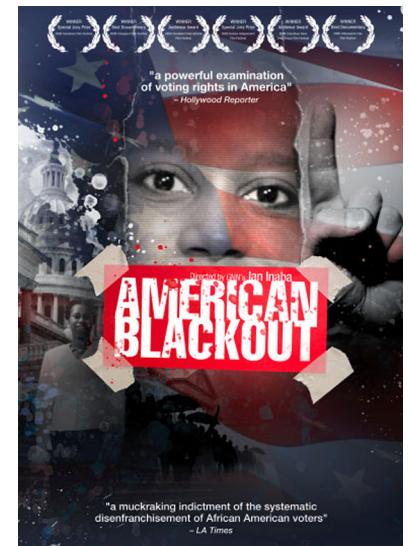
Paul also speaks Spanish and will be working with our members at Sea Mar Community Health Centers, Providence Hospital Everett, La Clinica Community Health Centers, and several other workplaces. Welcome, Paul!

## Shop Stewards reminder

Remember, to be reimbursed for 2006 dues, you must make your request by Jan. 31, 2007. If you need a copy of the Steward Reimbursement Policy, call the Local 8 office at (206) 441-8880 or (800) 600-2433.

## American Blackout

documentary to be shown on Wed., Jan. 17, 5:30 p.m., at the Seattle Labor Temple, Hall 8. Free (donations welcome). Learn about systematic voters' rights abuses during the 2000 and 2004 elections against voters of color in Florida and Ohio. For information, contact Liz Brown (206) 328-1190 or Joan Weiss (206) 441-8408 x16.



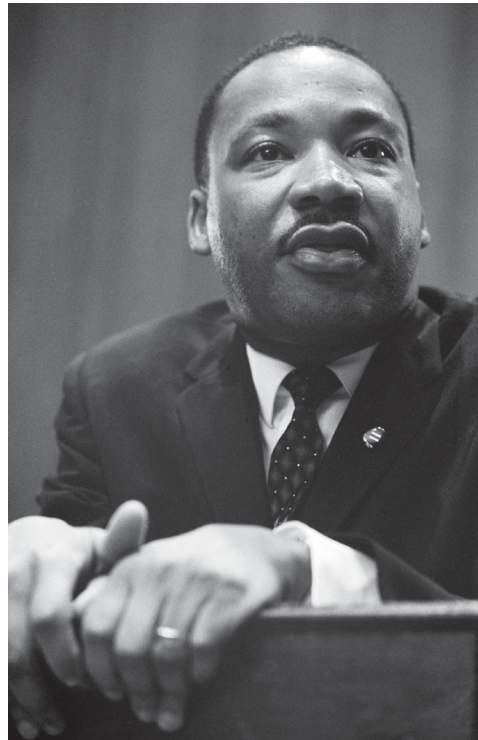
*“I’m looking forward to working with OPEIU Local 8 members to help strengthen the union’s tradition of rank-and-file activism.”*  
—Paul Bigman

# MLK March

As we do every year, OPEIU Local 8 will join with others in honoring the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. We honor his memory as he'd want us to, with action.

In Seattle, we will take part in the 24th annual region-wide Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, on Monday, January 15th. This year's theme is "Solidarity for Peace, Human Rights, and Economic Justice." The events will begin at Franklin High School (please note: **not** Garfield High School as in past years), at 3013 S. Mt. Baker Boulevard in Seattle. Workshops will start at 9:30 a.m., with a rally at 11:00 a.m., and a march immediately after the rally. There will be food available at the end of the march, with bus transportation back to Franklin. Look for the OPEIU Local 8 banner, and join with thousands of others to carry on the legacy of Dr. King.

In Olympia, we will join our members from Statewide Poverty Action Network and others for the Martin Luther King Day Action Summit and March on the Capitol. These actions will also take place on Monday, January 15th. Events will begin at St. John's Episcopal Church, 114 20th Avenue SE, Olympia. The Summit will start at 9:00 a.m., with a march and rally at 1:00 p.m. South Sound Local 8 members can join with anti-poverty activists throughout the region to continue Dr. King's efforts.



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.  
U.S. civil rights leader & clergyman  
(1929–1968)

*"I believe that un-armed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. That is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant."  
—Martin Luther King Jr., accepting Nobel Peace Prize, Dec. 10, 1964.*

## MLK Marchers: Meet at Franklin High now

### STATE OF THE UNION

*(continued from page 5)*

When Local 8 assists the unorganized to form a union, we expect those workers to form an in-house Organizing Committee made up of a representative 10% of their co-workers. That's the best way to ensure two-way communication and to build local union support. We hope to apply the same principle to our Local 8 membership. We will be challenging Local 8's existing Membership Action Committee (MAC) to build their ranks to reflect 10% of our membership. We hope to have 500 MAC members mobilized by the end of 2007.

The Membership Action Committee will enhance support to Shop Stewards and other activists to strengthen our Local's core commitments to engage members in the wider labor movement and in union workplace issues, to provide aggressive and responsive representation, to communicate with members effectively and regularly, to provide education and resources to our Stewards and other union leaders and to organize unorganized workers.

A membership connected with their union and ready for action means that Local 8 will be in a better position to face the challenges of the coming year. We wish all members a happy and peaceful 2007!

# Absentee Ballot Request Form

Your eligibility to vote will be verified by OPEIU Local 8 upon receipt of this completed form.

This ballot request must be RECEIVED in OPEIU Local 8's office by February 13, 2007 (fifteen days prior to election day). To receive your absentee ballot, the following information must be LEGIBLE and COMPLETE. Failure to comply with the above may result in your not receiving your mail ballot. A ballot will be mailed to you in February.

Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Employer & Work Site \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Request \_\_\_\_\_

For OPEIU Local 8 use only: Ballot # \_\_\_\_\_



OPEIU Local 8, 2800 First Ave., Rm. 304, Seattle, WA 98121-1114

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## Address Service Requested

### Office & Professional Employees

### International Union Local 8's

**Meetings** are held at the Seattle Labor Temple at 2800 First Ave. (between Clay & Broad Sts.) Free parking under the Ellington Condos for Membership Meeting only. On the monitor by the garage door, punch in: \*011213#.

Email: [opeiu8@opeiu8.org](mailto:opei8@opeiu8.org)

**[www.opeiu8.org](http://www.opeiu8.org)**