



Local

OPEIU Journal

www.opeiu8.org

Vol. 23, No. 4

September 2008

SAT., SEPT. 13

- Leadership Training, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Kennewick (see page 6).

MON., SEPT. 15

- Know Your Workplace Rights, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., Kennewick (see page 6).

SAT., SEPT. 20

- Labor Neighbor, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., statewide (see page 6).

WED., SEPT. 24

- Membership Meeting, 6:15 p.m., Hall 8, Seattle Labor Temple, 2800 First Avenue. *Agenda: Vote on Merger with Local 23 and First Reading of Proposed By-laws Changes.*
- New Member Orientation, 5:30 p.m., Room 310.
- Political Action Committee, 5:30 p.m., Hall 8.

SUN., SEPT. 28

- Local 8 Mad Dogs Run/Walk Fundraiser for Breast Cancer Support (see page 3).

SAT., OCT. 4

- Leadership Training, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Tukwila (see page 6).

Check www.opeiu8.org for more details.

“Union YES,” say Kennewick General Hospital Workers



The Kennewick General Hospital Workers Organizing Committee.

On June 6, nearly 75% of the 200 service and technical workers at Kennewick General Hospital voted to become union.

The group, KGH Workers United, will be jointly represented by OPEIU Local 8 and SEIU Healthcare 1199NW. The campaign was unique in that both unions collaborated on a joint petition and will negotiate one union contract. Through a variety of workplace and public actions, KGH workers were successful in getting their employer to agree to a quick and fair mail ballot election conducted by the Public Employment Relations Commission.

“Our union effort will hopefully improve our patient care to the community because we’ll be working alongside administration,” said **Ray Hernandez**, a medical courier at the hospital. The several-month campaign to unionize included a survey gauging the top issues of hospital employees. Of those issues, improved wages and benefits ranked high. “Now we can start moving forward with our issues,” Hernandez said. “I look at it as a good thing from both sides and a way to improve standards for all health care workers.” Welcome to our new members.

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M E M B E R S . . .

Local 8 Recognized for our Labor Neighbor Volunteers

Labor Neighbor is a grassroots member-to-member political education program that *works!* Union members talk to other union members and provide information about issues that are imperative for working families, and the candidates who support those issues. Local 8 is in the top three unions of Labor Neighbor volunteers. We couldn't have achieved this without these Local 8 heroes: Maureen Bo, Angela Boehlke, Lily Wilson-Codega, Marie Cook, MJ Davidson, Craig Davis, Cathy Harger, Shannon Halme, Jeff Johnson, Benjamin Lawver, Paul Lee, Kellie McGuire, Suzanne Mode, Shelby Mooney,

Lori Province, Amanda Saylor, Cindy Schu, Kathi Scott, Robby Stern, Ligia Velázquez, Joan Weiss and Alan Wolfson. As of August 1, we reached 205 volunteer hours, more than halfway toward meeting our goal of 400 hours by Election Day. Join in helping us achieve and exceed this goal. To find out when and where you can volunteer, go to the OPEIU Local 8 website at www.opeiu8.org under What's New: 2008 Labor Neighbor Phone Bank & Walk Schedule.

We also have great gifts for volunteering, and the PAC is holding a monthly drawing awarding a \$25 gift certificate to the union store of your choice for volunteering for Labor/Neighbor or registering voters at your worksite. The more shifts you work each month, the greater your chances of winning.



La Clínica Members Honored for their Struggle

Local 8 Members from La Clínica—Cathy Kahn and José Pulido (at center), along with Business Manager Suzanne Mode and Organizer Shelby Mooney, accept the Washington State Labor Council 2008 Mother Jones Award at this year's convention. Mother Jones was an early 1900's labor and community organizer whose relentless determination was vividly expressed in her famous declaration, "Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living."

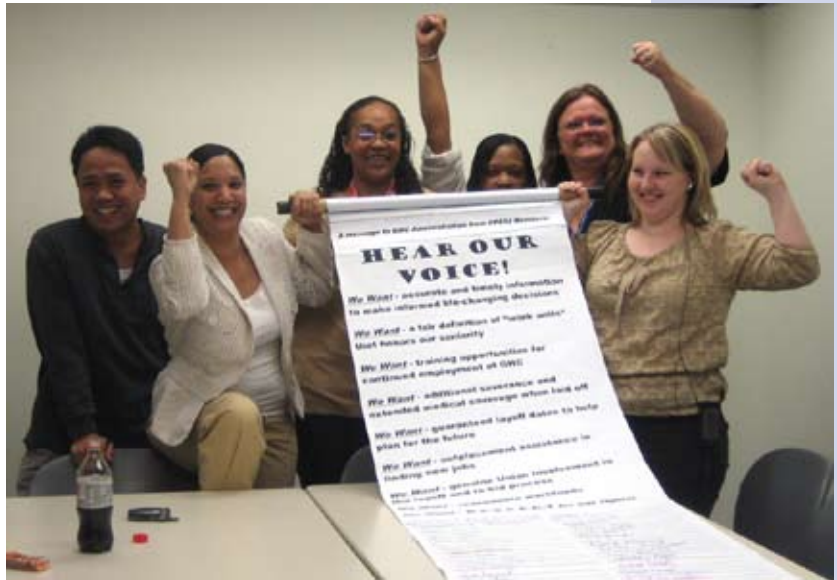


La Clínica workers and Local 8 were honored for their very long but successful fight to win a strong contract that includes just cause protection, hourly pension contributions and a wage scale with 20 annual step increases! The La Clínica contract helps set the standard for all Community and Migrant Health Centers around the state.

. . . I N A C T I O N

Union Activism at GHC Gets Results

Since January, members working at Group Health Cooperative have gone through non-stop reorganization initiatives to eliminate, centralize, and automate their jobs. When GHC illegally refused to bargain with OPEIU over this, the union filed Unfair Labor Practice charges. On July 30, the National Labor Relations Board issued a complaint against GHC and scheduled a trial for October. Members wrote a proclamation with their layoff priorities and signed “Hear Our Voice” pledges urging their employer to bargain with the union. It worked: GHC came to the bargaining table over the latest initiative to centralize appointment making (which impacts those who work in primary care clinics). Members got to vote on the final proposal, which they passed by a majority.



Providence Workers Send a Message

Over 500 workers signed a petition and personally inscribed face masks to show CEO David Brooks what they think about the new non-negotiated attendance policy.

Shown here delivering those messages for their fellow members are Local 8 leaders *Lucy Lopez-Flores*, *Mercelle Mercereau*, *Carrie Murril*, and

Audrey Gunderson. The union filed Unfair Labor Practice charges which have been withdrawn pending PEMC’s agreement to now bargain over the policy.

Walk for our Union Sisters with Breast Cancer on the Best Waterfront Route in Seattle

Join the Local 8 Mad Dogs Team on Sunday, September 28 at 9:00 a.m. We will walk (or run) three miles along Alki Beach to benefit Northwest Hope and Healing. Contact Cindy Schu at Local 8 to get registration information at cindy@opeiu8.org or (206) 441-8276.



*When
We Stand
Together,
We Win!*

Local 8 Homecare Improves Contract Standards for All



Local 8 caregivers help raise the standards for homecare workers statewide. Our mileage reimbursement ranges from \$0.48 to \$0.585 cents per mile. The average starting wage is now \$10.00 an hour and the scale goes up to \$11.00 or more in all our contracts. Caregivers can get health insurance for \$17.00 a month if they work at least 20 hours a week. All Local 8 caregivers now enjoy paid vacation, sick leave, bereavement leave and some paid holidays.

The CDM Home Care Services bargaining team found the process interesting, just how the whole process works! Now I'm going to try being a Shop Steward," said **Rhonda Stanfill**, CDM bargaining team member.

One of Local 8's Legislative priorities for next year will be to get funding for "wait time." When workers travel from one client to the next they sometimes have to wait until the next half hour to begin work. The Department of Labor and Industry calls this "engaged to wait" time and workers are to be paid for it. The legislature needs to fund this expense.

*"...we have finally secured a pay system that's fair and equitable."
—Vicki Jordan*

KCHA Agrees to a Wage Scale with Steps

Members Vote to End 'Merit System'

The Union reached a historic Tentative Agreement with the King County Housing Authority (KCHA) to move off the merit system and replace it with a wage scale and annual "step" increases. Union members voted overwhelmingly to accept the new compensation system.

As a condition of our Union contract, KCHA agreed to assess the current merit pay system and consider alternatives. A recently completed Compensation Study found the need for market adjustments to pay rates, new wage range groupings of positions, updated job descriptions and new job titles for some positions. Most important, the study's consultants recommended that the merit pay system be discontinued for employees represented by OPEIU Local 8.

Starting this fall, all bargaining unit employees will be placed on a wage scale that includes annual cost-of-living-adjustments (COLA) and step increases of two percent (2%) on their anniversary date.

Bargaining Team member **Vicki Jordan** noted, "I am proud to say that we have finally secured a pay system that's fair and equitable. Anniversary increases will now be based on our longevity—not favoritism. This is one of the main reasons we wanted Union representation and it's finally happened!"



Unity BBQ

Western Washington members and their families from Providence Everett Medical Center, Group Health Cooperative, Sea Mar Medical Centers, and Visiting Nurse Home Care enjoyed a great afternoon of sun, fun and food at American Legion Memorial Park in Everett. This was OPEIU Local 8's first (but not last) Western Washington Unity BBQ. Local 8 organizer **Shelby Mooney** and husband **Brock** kept the hamburgers, Boca Burgers and hot dogs flowing. **Cindy Schu**, Organizing Director, welcomed everyone with raffle tickets for prizes given out during the celebration. Fun and games included a three-legged race, water balloon toss, watermelon eating contest, face painting and lots and lots of eating while also enjoying a view of the sound.



Union Scholarship Winners

Did you know Local 8 offers several scholarship opportunities for members and their families? Check out www.opeiu8.org and click on Membership Resources. Congratulations to these winners: Longtime activist **Maribel Martinez** (at left) won the \$3,000 John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship to help fund law school, **Yesenia Farfán**, daughter of **Ligia Velázquez**, won the Romeo Corbeil Memorial Scholarship to attend a labor summer school program for youth, and **Sarah Strole**, daughter of Spokane member **Barbara Strole**, won the \$1,000 Union Plus Scholarship. Congratulations!

Soon it will be time to apply for 2009 scholarships at www.opeiu8.org.

Member Education

Free Classes Coming Up this Fall—Open to All Members

If you couldn't make it to a class earlier this year, don't worry, there are still a few more trainings left: the last trainings of the year will be in Olympia on November 15 and Tukwila on December 6.

Saturday, Sept. 13
10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Leadership Training
KENNEWICK
IBEW Local 112, 2637 W.
Albany St.

Monday, Sept. 15
5:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.
Know Your Workplace Rights!
KENNEWICK
Benton County PUD
Auditorium, 2721 W. 10th Ave.

Saturday, Sept. 20
9 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
Labor Neighbor
STATEWIDE
(see below)

Saturday, Oct. 4
10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Leadership Training
TUKWILA
Tukwila Community Center

Got an idea for a class? Email your suggestions for 2009 to cindy@opeiu8.org.

Like your Shop Steward trainings a little more active?

Labor Neighbor = 2 Member Education Segments!

Healthy exercise, fresh air, fellowship: join the Washington State Labor Council's Labor Neighbor activities in Clark, Martin Luther King, Pierce and Snohomish counties (and other locations to be determined). Put on your walking shoes and join us Saturday, September 20. If you are unable to walk with us, there are other projects you can help out with that day. Orientation will be provided.

Remember, the world is run by those who show up, so let's get out there and help elect candidates who support working families. Contact **Shelby Mooney** at (800) 600-2433, (206) 441-8880 x107 or (206) 448-2625. Her email is shelby@opeiu8.org. See link on back.



¿Habla Español?

Members at La Clinica, Consejo Counseling and Referral Service, Sea Mar Community Health Centers and elsewhere serve many Spanish-speaking clients and patients. Fortunately, Local 8 has staff and Shop Stewards who speak Spanish. Thanks to Union Representative **Ligia Velázquez**, we now have a Shop Steward training conducted solely in Spanish. The first training on July 26 was honored with a surprise appearance from **Senator Margarita Prentice** (*pictured at left*) who praised the Stewards for their advocacy role in helping our Spanish-speaking members exercise their rights.

Statewide Local 8 Union Meet-Ups

By Suzanne Mode and Cindy Schu

Local 8's members now live and work in counties all around the state, yet General Membership and Executive Board meetings where union business is decided are held only in Seattle. This makes full participation in the union difficult for many Local 8 Members.

In 2005, members took the first step toward a more fully representative decision-making structure by adding four Regional Board members from Eastern Washington, the South/Southwest and North. Now, it's time to complete the transition to become the most democratically representative union we can be.

In the Fall of 2009 we plan to hold a "Voice of the Membership" assembly for Local 8 members to plan what a more representative statewide union might look like. To hear ideas from members on how this event will be shaped and to discuss the outcome of a possible merger with our sister Local 23 in Tacoma, we both would like to invite you to attend one of the Statewide Membership Meetings below.

If you're interested in attending, please contact suzanne@opeiu8.org or cindy@opeiu8.org or call either of us at 1-800-600-2433. We look forward to working with our members to continue making Local 8 the most democratic union possible.

*September Membership Meeting Agenda:
Vote on Merger with Local 23 (see article
this page) & First Reading of Proposed
By-Laws Changes.*

2008 Statewide Union Meet-ups

Monday, Sept 29 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. VANCOUVER First Baptist Church, 108 W. 27th St., in the sanctuary. In old Vancouver on the corner of 27th and Main St. across from Dairy Queen.	Thursday, Oct. 2 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. KENNEWICK Keewaydin Park, 405 S. Dayton St.	Monday, Oct. 6 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. EVERETT Everett Labor Temple, 2812 Lombard Ave., Main Hall. Walk in front doors and go straight to the back.	Tuesday, Oct. 21 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. BELLINGHAM Garden St. Methodist Church, 1326 N. Garden St., Fireplace Rm.	Saturday, Nov. 8 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. ABERDEEN St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 400 E. 1st St., in the Great Hall.
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Stewards Corner: Are You Fit for Duty?

by Mae Taylor, Registered Health Information Technician and Shop Steward, Valley Medical Center

Are you having difficulty performing your job? It may not be what you or your employer suspect. In fact, it may be a serious health condition. Contact your doctor immediately to get a diagnosis and determine if you need an accommodation or qualify for FMLA/WFCA (Family Medical Leave Act/Washington Family Care Act). Contact your steward if you need more information or go to <http://www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/LeaveBenefits/FamilyCare/LawsPolicies/default.asp>. Protect yourself and your job!

Finding info at

www.opeiu8.org



Calendar: see menu on the left side of the home page.

Trainings: In the blue menu bar at the top of the home page, click on “Member Education”. This will give you a PDF of the annual schedule.

Labor Neighbor: At the center of the home page is the red “What’s New” bar, and just below it, click on “2008 Labor Neighbor Phone Bank & Walk Schedule.”

Shop Steward/Leadership Manual: Yellow menu bar, upper right.

Email Alert Signup: Sign up to receive newsletter and other info by email. Blue box on right.

Contact Your Union Representative: On home page, menu bar on left or yellow upper right.

Check back often—the website changes frequently.



Local OPEIU Journal

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

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 Meetings only. After 5:00 p.m., punch in *011213# on the monitor by the garage door.

Email: opeiu8@opeiu8.org

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