



# Teamster Talk



*Members of Teamsters Local 117*

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Teamsters at Waste Management (WMI) honor Dr. King's legacy on the MLK Day holiday. Members at WMI are facing workplace safety issues and ongoing contract fights across the country.

## Teamsters unite in honor of Dr. King's legacy

Members of Teamsters Local 117 and their families joined thousands of community members to celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the annual MLK March and Rally in Seattle on January 17, 2011.

It was a daylong celebration honoring the late, great civil rights leader, with workshops in the morning, an 11 A.M. rally, and a noonday march from Garfield High School in Seattle's Central District to the federal building downtown.

### ACTIONS AT WASTE MANAGEMENT

Earlier in the day, Teamster sanitation workers at Waste Management (WMI) from Locals 117 and 174 engaged in solidarity actions at several of WMI's facilities in the area to honor the King holiday and to draw attention to issues involving workplace safety, working conditions, and ongoing contract fights with the company. Similar actions were held at cities across the country.

"We are facing some of the same issues today that Union members

faced 43 years ago when Dr. King traveled to Memphis in 1968 to lend his support to striking sanitation workers," said Local 117 Secretary-Treasurer, Tracey A. Thompson.

In remembrance of Dr. King and the struggle of the Memphis workers, Teamsters at the action held signs that read, "I am a man" and wore stickers that quoted Dr. King, reading, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

Elder LeRoy Watson, a retired Teamster sanitation worker from Allied Waste, led the group in an invocation and moment of silence in honor of Dr. King and a Teamster sanitation worker who was recently killed in a forklift accident in Burlington. "I know the struggles that you face. I faced the same struggles every day during my 40-year career as a Teamster," Watson said.

### KEEPING THE DREAM ALIVE

Back at the march, Teamsters celebrated the day with other labor union leaders and community members.

"I have been marching for over 30 years," said Cynthia Hall, a longtime Teamsters Local 117 member at Hertz. "The importance of the march is to keep Dr. King's dream alive. That's why we need to bring our children out here. We can't let the dream die."

## A message from your Secretary-Treasurer



Brothers and Sisters:

As Americans, we all recognize the extraordinary contributions Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. made to the advancement of civil rights in this country. King organized the Montgomery Bus Boycott, led a ground-breaking march on Washington, and paved the way for the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964.

Dr. King was also a champion of organized labor. In 1961 King said, "The labor movement was the principal force that transformed misery and despair into hope and progress."

In April 1968, King went to Memphis to lend his support to city sanitation workers who were striking in protest of low wages and poor working conditions. King not only worked tirelessly to end racial discrimination, segregation and Jim Crow laws, but he also worked to improve conditions for workers and to end poverty.



*Teamsters at the MLK March and Rally - Jan. 17, 2011*

Members of Teamsters Local 117 proudly honored the legacy of Dr. King by participating in the annual MLK March and Rally in Seattle on January 17. Teamsters at Local 117 and 174 also engaged in a solidarity action at Waste Management on the MLK holiday, one of many actions held in cities across the country in support of sanitation workers, who face difficult contract fights and who perform dangerous and important work.

Thank you for joining us in these actions to celebrate the achievements of Dr. King and to continue our efforts to expand the rights, wages and benefits of working families.

In Solidarity,

Tracey A. Thompson  
Secretary-Treasurer

## Admin Support group wins financial boost for senior employees

Working in a coalition of Unions that represent administrative support classifications throughout King County, your Local Union has achieved a tentative agreement which financially recognizes long-term County employees for their service.

Under the agreement, approximately 250 Local 117 members in the County's administrative support classifications will receive longevity pay after 15 years of service so long as they maintain a minimum performance threshold.

The newly-negotiated plan states that members with 15 years of service or greater will receive a 1.5 percent salary increase, while members with 20 years of service or greater will receive a 3 percent increase. The 1.5 and 3 percent increases are stand alone and not cumulative. Longevity pay will be granted for senior employees in 2012 who maintain a 3.25 eligibility threshold in 2011.

"We presented the County with a comparable analysis and clearly demonstrated in the arbitration hearing that employees in the County's administrative support classifications had fallen behind relative to comparable positions at other cities and counties in our region," said Local 117 General Counsel Spencer Thal, the lead negotiator in the case.

# Challenging legislative session kicks off in Olympia



DOC members march on the Capitol in a Day of Action!

On January 10, an extremely challenging 105-day legislative session began in Olympia. Your Local Union continues to fight hard to protect the interests of working families as the Washington State Legislature struggles to confront a \$5.6 billion deficit.

Your Union's Government Relations Coordinator Anna Jancewicz will be in Olympia every day throughout the session representing members of Teamsters Local 117, while Political Action Coordinator Lily Wilson-Codega will be busy mobilizing members from our Legislative and Political Action Committees to provide testimony, lobbying and support.

Your Union's top priorities for the

session include fighting to reverse pieces of the across-the-board budget reductions that were imposed on State employees at the Department of Corrections (DOC) as well as protecting Teamsters at DOC from further cuts that jeopardize the safety of Correctional Employees and the public. We will also be working hard to stave off threats of further reductions in staffing and further facility closures at DOC.

In addition, your Union will be working to pass three important bills to protect Correctional Employees and their families:

### 1) INTEREST ARBITRATION FOR CORRECTIONAL EMPLOYEES

Interest arbitration allows a neutral arbitrator to settle a contract if the parties cannot reach an agreement in negotiations. County Correctional Employees, the Washington State Patrol, local police officers, firefighters and other critical law enforcement and public safety professionals have a statutory right to interest arbitration. It is time that our State's Correctional Employees are afforded this basic protection.

### 2) MANDATORY OVERTIME PROHIBITION FOR NURSES

Nurses at DOC work in an extremely stressful environment of administering health care services to convicted felons. Currently, nurses in our State's prisons are frequently

subjected to mandatory overtime. Fatigue created by long, grueling hours creates an unsafe working environment for nurses within our State's prisons. It's time we extend the current prohibition on mandatory overtime to State nurses.

### 3) LIFT FIREARM RESTRICTIONS FOR CORRECTIONAL EMPLOYEES

Correctional Employees in our State's prisons are often subjected to serious threats by convicted felons, who are later released into our communities. While off-duty, many DOC employees have been directly threatened and harassed by former inmates. Correctional Employees should have the same right as other law enforcement professionals to protect themselves and their families.

Your Union is developing a legislative SWAT team of members who will be available to testify on these and other bills at public hearings during session.

If you are interested in joining this team, please contact Political Action Coordinator Lily Wilson-Codega at 206-441-4860 ext. 1258.

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## Admin Support

Continued from Page 2

"The Union did a fantastic job with its presentation," said King County Shop Steward Walt Chaffee, who participated in bargaining. "From my perspective, we have made great strides at recognizing members for their long-term service in an incredibly difficult economic environment."

Upcoming brown bag meetings will be scheduled across the County to discuss the new tentative agreement. Meeting times and locations will be announced on your Union's website at [www.teamsters117.org](http://www.teamsters117.org) once they are established.

## Beckendorf scholarship now accepting applications!



The Jerry Beckendorf Scholarship fund is now accepting applications for 2011. The applicant must be a high school senior and the son or daughter of a member of a labor union living in Pierce County.

The 2011 application can be accessed online at [www.teamsters117.org](http://www.teamsters117.org). Deadline for submitting the application is February 28, 2011. The Beckendorf Scholarship estimates awarding up to 8 scholarships ranging from \$250 to \$1,500 each to students who are planning to attend a college or university, community college or junior college, trade or technical school in the fall of 2011.

Since 2003, the Jerry Beckendorf Community Services Scholarship program has awarded more than \$35,000 to 58 graduating seniors from Union families living in Pierce County.

For more information on this program, contact Nathe Lawver, AFL-CIO Community Services Liaison at 253-973-3765.



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### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

January 2011 - DOC Contract Vote

February 5 – Industry-wide Grocery Summit

February 21 - Walla Walla PAC Meeting

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