

What's the Buzz – 1067 ?



Council 93
Local 1067

February 2001
Volume 1, Issue 3

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"RAP WITH THE PREZ"

*by Rocco Richardi, President
Local 1067*

The two dirtiest words in the union
" DUES INCREASE."

A lot of members called me upset about the dues increase stating every time we get a raise, we get a dues increase. The answer to the questions is that the dues increase pays for the raises of the union officials, staff and attorney's at Council 93 and the International. That is their cost of living. Now for \$24.66, which comes to \$6.165 per week we get arbitration's, dental, eye glasses, health insurance, 15 sick days, 13 holidays, tuition remission, vacation time, extended sick leave, personal days, contract raises, and representation when needed. I believe we get a good bang for our buck! Look how much we spend at the coffee shop every week. Local 1067 only gets \$2.15 out of the \$24.66 to run our local. Another question that was asked was how much does the President, Table Officers and Chief Stewards get paid. The answer is from the President on down to the Chief Stewards nobody receives any pay.

So I hope this answers your questions about union and if you get chance compare with somebody that doesn't have a union and see what they get for benefits and working conditions.

That is why I believe in the UNION so strongly.

NEGOTIATIONS

Our contract expires
June 30

The bargaining team is meeting
to compile the proposals.

Contact your Steward with your
concerns.

We will start bargaining with
management soon.

Look for more information in the
next issue.

ORGANIZING FOR A STRONGER UNION VOICE

by Alva Arellano
AFSCME Council 93

The **Organizing Department** has been actively working with your local leadership to identify any employees who are currently under contract with the State and Community Colleges as 03/part-time employees. These employees work side by side with our members doing bargaining-unit work yet they receive not one sick day, not one vacation day, or any other type of benefit. Local 1067 decided that "enough is enough" and took on the challenge full force.

These employees should have the right to decide at the ballot box if they choose to have AFSCME representation. In order to reach this election day 03/parttime employees must sign an AFSCME interest card requesting that the State Labor Commission hold a secret ballot election to determine their interest in AFSCME representation. If you know of an employee who is working under these conditions and would like to speak with an organizer please have them call 617-367-3686. You will find a reply form that can be submitted directly to the Organizing Department for further

information by logging onto AFSCME Council 93's Web page at www.afscmecouncil93.org

You can also find out more about what is going on around the county when it comes to fighting for workers rights by logging onto www.afscme.org

Join the fight on your campus to secure better working conditions for the 03/partime employees.

KNOW YOUR

CONTRACT!!

by *Mark Normantowicz*
Holyoke Community College

We received eleven responses to the last contest of which seven had the correct answers to all three questions. The winner is **Denise Gomes**, a Clerk V in the Facilities Department at **Massasoit Community College**. Congratulations Denise!!!

The correct answers to the questions in the last issue are:

Question: If an employee is assigned work by the CEO in a grade lower than that in which the employee performs his/her duties, he/she will be compensated at his regular rate of pay as if performing his/her regular duties. True or False?

Answer: True

Question: How long is the Probationary period of a new employee?

Answer: Seven (7) months

Question: Failure to work a compulsory overtime assignment shall be wrongful and result in the imposition of disciplinary measures.

True or False?

Answer: True

This Month's Questions

Question: Find and correctly site the Article and Section quoted: "The Union shall represent all persons in the bargaining unit without regard to race, color, religious creed, national origin, age, religious affiliation (if any), gender, marital status, sexual orientation or participation in the activities of the Union.

Question: Find and correctly site the Article and Section quoted: " Where it is currently the practice, at least two employees shall be assigned when working underground, in tunnels, in crawl spaces, in hazardous areas where steam, sewage, electrical, or other systems exist, in trenches with a depth of five or more feet, or when working more than ten feet above the floor or the ground. For other institutions, appropriate precautions (i.e., additional staffing, close supervision, etc.) will be taken to ensure the safety of employees working in these hazardous areas.

Question: Find and correctly site the Article and Section quoted: "An employee shall have the right to inspect his/her Official Personnel File during regular business hours upon request and when necessary by appointment, and shall have a right to copy at his/her expense. The Union or a representative thereof, shall have access to an employee's Official Personnel File upon prior written authorization of such employee.



Springfield Technical Community College

By *Walter Korzeniowski and Bruce Demers*

Springfield Technical Community College (STCC) is located at the Springfield Armory National Historic Site. On this 55-acre tract of land, STCC and the National Park Service share these grounds. STCC occupying 35-acres, and the Springfield Armory Museum occupying 20-acres of this site

It was George Washington who first commissioned this site in 1794,

which became our counties first arsenal. Production of weapons at the Armory began as early as 1795 and continued until after World War II. Then the Armory headed into an era of research and development rather than production, and in 1964 the decision to phase out the Armory was announced.

In the same year the City of Springfield, on the grounds of the former Trade High School, established Springfield Technical Institute (STI). The Springfield School Committee and the Massachusetts Department of Health, Education, and Welfare operated STI jointly. The Institute was overwhelmed with applications and it became apparent that the limited space of the former Trade High School would not be sufficient.

The decommissioning of the Armory provided a solution to STI's dilemma. STI moved into three buildings on the Armory grounds, in the summer of 1967. In September STI opened its doors directed by the Massachusetts Board of Regional Community Colleges. The Armory was officially closed in April 1968 and in August of that year; the Institutes name was changed to *Springfield Technical Community College* making it the twelfth community college in the state system.

STCC's initial enrollment of students numbered 400 with a faculty of 20. At present Springfield Technical Community College has over 7,000 men and women enrolled in the day and evening divisions. Nearly 23,000 people have graduated from STCC since it's founding. The college offers 46 associate degree programs with 26 options, and 29 certificate programs.

Come visit our campus Web site at www.stcc.mass.edu. If you have the time we recommend you visit our campus at One Armory Square, Springfield, MA 01105. While you are there make sure you stop by and tour The Springfield Armory Museum. The Armory is opened 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. The Museum is closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Years Day.

INTERNET SITE:

Two Union Web sites of interest are:
Council 93 –

STEP IV: A PROCEDURAL AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

by Brian Stickler

Field Service Director

AFSCME Council 93

In the State and Community College contract (AFSCME Local 1067) there is a provision (Article 29) for grievances to be informally reviewed by the Board of Higher Education and the Union prior to going to Arbitration. This column is a brief attempt to acquaint the membership with the history, purpose, and statistical record of that provision.

In the 1995 contract negotiations the Union raised a major concern to management regarding the inability of the existent Step IV of the grievance procedure to do anything but rubber stamp prior management decisions. After much discussion, the parties agreed to establish a panel that would review grievances the Union pursued to this step. The panel consists of five members – two from the Union, two from the colleges and a representative of the Board of Higher Education. As it has evolved, the panel members generally are: Howie Fain, Assistant Director of HS/Hed or myself representing Council 93; Rocco Richardi, President of Local 1067, or one of the 1067 table officers representing the Local; one HR Director from a Community College and one HR Director from a State College. The Chair is Peter Tsaffaras, Assistant Director of Human Resources for the Board of Higher Education.

Generally, the Step IV grievance is presented to the panel by a Staff Representative assisted by the Chief Steward and the grievant. The hearing is informal and questions are frequently asked by the panelists. Once the presentation is completed, the panel meets in private to discuss the case. If the panel sees a possibility for a settlement, they will caucus with each side: The Union panelists talking to the Union, and the management panelists

talking to the College. It is interesting how often the panelists, being somewhat unbiased in that they are not involved in the specific issues being discussed, can push the parties to a fair and just resolution.

Meeting, as needed, to address those grievances filed to Step IV, the purpose of this step of the grievance procedure is not to render a decision on an issue, but, rather, to see if the parties, with assistance from the panel, can reach a resolution of the case. If the Union and the college cannot reach an agreement to resolve the case, the Union may either take the case to arbitration or, if it feels there is insufficient merit to the case, withdraw the grievance. Listed below are some statistics relating to this process.

From its implementation in 1996 through December 31, 2000:

193 grievances have been filed to Step IV.

58 cases were unresolved at Step IV and went to arbitration.

74 cases were settled.

46 cases were withdrawn.

15 cases are pending settlement, decision to arbitrate or withdrawal.

A year-by-year breakdown of these 193 grievances shows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Cases Filed</u>
1996	8
1997	62
1998	43
1999	48
2000	32

Looking at these statistics from a historical perspective it can be seen that this process has been quite effective in settling cases prior to arbitration. It also has given the Union the ability to objectively review these cases and determine if there is sufficient merit to warrant arbitration. In settling and reviewing these grievances, the number of cases filed to arbitration has been cut in half resulting in enormous savings to

members over that which existed prior to 1996.

Step IV Grievance Procedure

by Chris Olsen, Vice President

Local 1067

Well here you are, you have made it to Step IV of the grievance procedure. This is not to be confused with one of the serenity steps, although a little serenity could help your inner self at this level.

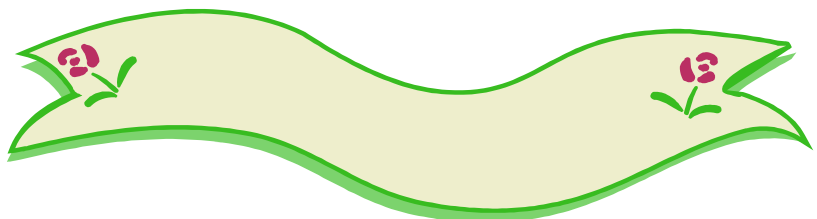
The first thing about Step IV of the grievance procedure, which happens to be the "chairpersons" favorite reason for disqualifying a Step IV grievance is timeliness. I realize we have ten (10) days (inclusive of Saturday, Sunday and holidays) to file at this level but I can not stress enough that your grievance be on time.

I know that by the time you reach this level of the procedure the interpretations of your department head (Level I), your HR Director (Level II), your CEO designee (Level III) have you about ready to explode, be patient. You owe it to yourself to be prepared and in control of your issue. Have the matter of fact evidence with you and in order, ready for distribution. There are five (5) panel members and I, for one, remember more of an issue if I can read it. Someday Howie is going to tell me the secret to his ability of recall.

Try to relax, I don't mean put your feet up on the table or take a nap, but be yourself, your issue is important or you would not have brought it to this level. It is my opinion that most grievances presented at this level are resolvable. It is also important that your council representative is well versed on the

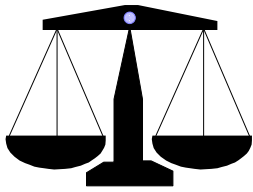
the membership and the Union in terms of time, effort, and dollars. While not perfect, this Step IV procedure has been a substantial improvement for the

grievance, we all know how thin our representatives are spread so make sure they know exactly what it is you expect and will accept on the case. Be prepared



to listen to alternate possible solutions. Preliminary decisions at this level are generally fair although it has been brought to my attention that some panel members are more fair to whom their loyalty lies. I find this hard to believe, don't you?

If for whatever reason the results at this level are less than you care for and your issue is found to have merit at the Executive Board, you get to deal the cards again in front of the arbitrator. Now, since you've presented this so many times your prepared and you know this is the level at which you are going to WIN.



MY FAVORITE GRIEVANCE

*by Jim Kefalas
Salem State College*

Let me begin this letter by stating that this case is about dignity, respect and civility. This is a case about an 11 to 7 shift female maintainer by the name of June Jones (not her real name). A supervisor (not in the AFSCME unit) wrote the word RETARDED on his notepad, referring to June Jones. After a thorough investigation, we learned that the writings were indeed those of the insensitive supervisor. This activity bothered me deeply for I have a brother who is physically and mentally challenged.

Prior to the filing of this grievance I met with June to discuss the case. Her moods changed from anger and shock to despair. She openly wondered how she could continue to work under these conditions. From day one, I felt that this case would be settled on campus, that management would take the necessary steps to correct an injustice. I would soon learn that management teams refrain from disciplining one of their own for fear of admitting a deficiency in the system.

After receiving no justice for June Jones at the Step I level, the case was filed at Step II. Just prior to the Step II hearing, June Jones abruptly resigned from employment at Salem State College. June stated to me that she could no longer work in an environment that was hostile and demeaning against her. My instincts told me that a good woman and employee was leaving this college because of a supervisor's continued harassment. I promised June that I would continue her case in absentia.

In the weeks to follow, representatives from human resources, management, and even AFSCME offered their opinions that the Jones case was a loser, citing the huge fact that the grievant had resigned her position at the college. My quick answer to all parties was that I was going the distance to get justice for June Jones and to prevent this manager from conducting the same activity with another AFSCME union member. Again at II and III, no justice for June Jones.

The Jones case was then filed at Step IV level. We asked for the following as a remedy to settle the case:

- 1) Sensitivity training for the supervisor
- 2) Suspension without pay
- 3) Copy of discipline sent to his personnel file.

After numerous delays and rescheduling, the Jones case was heard approximately one year later. On the night before the Step IV hearing, due to personal reasons, the staff representative asked me if I was prepared to litigate the case myself. My answer was that the case had been delayed enough and I felt comfortable and prepared to move on.

At the Step IV hearing, the case was presented in an organized and passionate manner. I had received outstanding assistance from our Counsel, Howie Fain, and Vice President Chris Olsen. We felt good vibes from the administrators in attendance.

The Step IV hearing officers came

to the conclusion that June Jones had not received fair and just treatment from either her immediate supervisor or the management team at Salem State College. We came to a settlement agreement that went above and beyond our remedy request. For the first time since this case began, I felt that a certain justice had finally taken hold.

We can't go back and replay the injustice in this case. I only hope that June Jones can move on in a positive way. I'll never forget the strength and courage shown by June Jones and I wish her nothing but the best.

MEMBERSHIP TIDBITS

Bridgewater State College–Mary Ellen West, a library assistant was selected as Employee of the Month for January. She has worked at the College since 1995 and is described as “very dedicated to her job and her department” and “extremely energetic”. Congratulations Mary Ellen!!

Bridgewater State College–Karen Hathaway, a Computer Operator II was selected as Employee of the Month for February. She has worked at the College since 1980 and is very active in the union, serving as the newsletter editor, state treasurer, and former chief steward. Congratulations Karen!!

Labor Councils

*by Julie Curtis
Salem State College*

Last October I became the first member of AFSCME Local 1067 to be sworn in as a delegate to a central labor council in Massachusetts. In my case, it was the North Shore Labor Council and I represent the members of AFSCME Local 1067 on the Salem State and North Shore Community Colleges. When Karen Hathaway, Editor of What's The Buzz - Local 1067 asked me to write an article for the Newsletter explaining the Council I said “great!”

The North Shore Labor Council is comprised of 45 labor union's representing 17,000 members from communities ranging from Saugus to

Gloucester. It has as its purpose, to bring social and economic justice to people on the North Shore.

Some of the activities currently being worked on are:

1) Implementation of the “AFL-CIO Union Cities Initiative,” presently the focus is on organizing and mobilizing goals, some of the outreaches of this are, “Street Heat” and “Neighbor to Neighbor.” “Street Heat” is a Mobilization Committee that puts union people on the street to support causes we believe in. Examples of this are: holding political signs, picketing, handing out informational flyers, writing to local newspapers, etc.). “Neighbor to Neighbor” is a grass roots statewide organization that supports legislative issues for low-income individuals and families.

2) Working with Essex County Community Organization (ECCO), to expand a machinist-training program to other job growth areas that provide workers with a living wage and career path. The Organization also provides tutoring for educational opportunities such as the GED and English as a Second Language. I represent the Council on ECCO and recently we sponsored a Job Fair with representatives of the Laborers, Electrical Workers, Steelworkers, and Bricklayer’s unions attending. Even though it was a frigid Tuesday night, over 150 people showed up!

3) Sponsoring legislation that supports the working families’ agenda and endorsing candidates who support labor and the working families’ agenda. The North Shore Labor Council has an excellent reputation with 80% of endorsed candidates being elected to local offices. Last November, the Council “threw its support” to a first-time candidate running for State Representative in the Lynn/Saugus District. This candidate Mark Falzone went on the win the District with 65% of the vote.

As one of its largest outreach’s, the Council sponsors an Annual Legislative Dinner. Last year (its fifth), the guest speaker was David Bonior of Michigan,

the House Minority Whip. Over 350 people attended. Past speakers have been Senator Ted Kennedy and Linda Chavez-Thompson. This dinner gets larger every year. Other outreaches are through the University of Mass/Lowell and the Boston Labor Extension Programs. Past programs have been seminars on Workmen’s Compensation, Organizing Initiatives, Negotiation Tactics, and an annual Educational Conference. This all-day conference is geared towards the major issues facing the labor movement on the North Shore.

The motto of this organization is “The North Shore Labor Council, ‘where no union or worker stands alone!’” We meet the fourth Wednesday of every month in Lynn. If anyone would like more information on the North Shore Labor Council, please feel free to contact me at the Salem State College AFSCME Union Office (978) 542-6199. I will be glad to call you back and answer any questions you may have. Also, if any dues paying members in good standing from the North Shore Community or Salem State College campuses are interested in being the second delegate (which we are allowed to have because of the number of members we have in the Council’s area), call me and I’ll invite you to a meeting to see if you like it.

Finally, to the others in Local 1067 getting ready to affiliate in their respective areas Councils, welcome aboard!! It’s a lot of work, but you will find yourself enriched and fulfilled. You’ll be glad to join, I promise.

Reminder!!!!

Saturday, March 17th is **Evacuation Day** and is a floating holiday, except in Suffolk County. You have 120 days to use your holiday or request to be paid for it. Don’t forget!!!! It is also **St. Patrick’s Day**.



MEET YOUR STAFF REP

Jon Goliber has worked for AFSCME Council 93 as a **Staff Representative** for over three years. He moved here from Connecticut where he represented Police Officers at an AFSCME Council. That state allows public sector contracts that have come to impasse, to go on to interest arbitration. Jon approaches contract negotiations, as he would approach any arbitration. He recommends that all the facts and supporting documents are assembled prior to the start of negotiations. Jon worked for SEIU for three years prior to going to Connecticut. He represented schools, hospitals, some private sector, and the University of Massachusetts Harbor Campus. Jon co-negotiated a Higher Education contract along side AFSCME some sixteen years ago. Prior to that he worked at the Boston Public Library where he was elected Chief Steward for nine years in addition to one stint as an E-board Representative and one stint as a Steward. Jon has taken many labor courses from institutions such as the Labor Guild, UMass, and the George Meany Center in Maryland. He has set up many training programs and emphasizes the internal organizing of local leadership. Jon’s goal is to create a collection of arbitration cases and Labor Commission decisions to assist locals in winning cases. He is currently the Staff Representative for Northern Essex Community College, North Shore Community College, Middlesex Community College, Bunker Hill Community College, and Salem State College.

Alert!

**PETITION TO BUYBACK
RETIREMENT CREDIT
FOR PRIOR 03-SERVICE
TO THE COMMONWEALTH**

**Please see the AFSCME Steward at
your campus for details**