

October Newsletter

AFSCME LOCAL 448

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October 2021

President: Alice Sutherland
Vice President: Diane Ritter-263-6673
Secretary: Taquisha Santos-Teague
 973-2857
Treasurer: Laurie Scudder-987-7509

Chapter Chairs

Tanya Burns: DCFS-987-7542
 Marie Reck: Revenue-209-5405
 Jennifer Lavasseur: Lottery 773-330-0566

Members at Large

Aaron Sockwell: DHS-670-5283
 Robin Aebly: DCFS-908-9664
 Tom Soresie: DCFS-973-2857

Trustees

Tina Wren: DCFS-590-9350
 Jeff Bergstrom: DHS-901-2969
 Greg Duffy: DCFS-994-0502

People Chair

Laurie Scudder: Revenue-987-7509

Chris Hooser: Staff Representative-815-968-0447

Meeting Dates

Membership Meeting	Thursday 12-2-2021
Executive Board Meeting	Thursday October 7
All Membership meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m.	

Convention Delegates and Alternates Elected

This October 14-16, AFSCME Council 31 will hold its 22nd Biennial Convention in Springfield. Whether or not you are a delegate or alternate to the Convention, that gathering will mean a lot for your work over the next two years. Delegates to the convention will consider resolutions that will set the union's agenda and priorities in these very challenging times. Members who attend the convention often return home energized with a renewed sense of activism to build a strong local union and will have learned how to respond to the crucial issues facing their locals. If you're coming to the convention, you can count on gaining new skills—and new friends. And if you're not coming, be sure to catch up with the delegates and alternates from your local when they get back to get a full report!

I would like to thank everyone that attended our in person membership meeting on September 2nd and congratulate those that were elected to attend this year's AFSCME Council 31 Bi-Annual Convention.

Elected Delegates

Laurie Scudder
 Tamara Shorter
 Taquisha Santos-Teague

Elected Alternates

Dawn Chavez
 Greg Duffy
 Tina Wren

President Alice Sutherland and Vice President Diane Ritter will also attend the convention as delegates. Watch for an update on convention activities in the November newsletter.

Veterans Drop-In Center - Veterans 5K Run

“The Veterans Drop-In Center began in 2010 when a group of caring, compassionate people decided that Rockford area veterans and their families needed a place to gather and meet with their peers without some of the fees and formalities that come with other veterans organizations. We are constantly expanding upon the list of services and activities that we offer and currently offer 2 meals a day, computer usage, haircuts, massage, and chiropractic treatment. We also offer clothing, basic necessities, and the ability to connect to local veterans' organizations.....”

Our local will once again be a sponsor for this event which will take place on Saturday November 13, 2021, starting at 9 AM at Mercyhealth Sportscore 1.

Tips for Effective Stewards: Be Strategic in Your Grievance Handling

Imagine a doctor who tells every patient to take aspirin no matter what the ailment, or a carpenter whose only tool is a hammer. It's unlikely you would want to use the services of either one of them. Applying the same thinking to grievances means that stewards don't want to "prescribe" a written grievance for every problem that co-workers encounter on the job or view every workplace issue as a "nail" that needs pounding. You can be more thoughtful and strategic and strengthen your union and its ability to fight for the members by asking the following questions:

Is this a continuing problem or a one-time occurrence?

When you've got a situation where one member is unfairly disciplined for absenteeism, a grievance that challenges management's action might be exactly the right thing to do. But what if the discipline is part of a new harsh attendance policy, and this one discipline is the beginning of management's expected crackdown? Filing one grievance at a time may never get you the solution you need, at least not in a timely manner. But dealing with the policy with group grievances and actions and demanding to bargain might get better and faster results.

Is this case going to create a precedent and is it the *right* test case?

If you decide to challenge management's new attendance policy through a grievance, you want to make sure you have a case that clearly demonstrates the unfairness of the policy to an arbitrator. If the grievance goes to arbitration and you lose, you may be stuck with the result for a long time. It is often wiser to wait for a stronger case that the union can take to arbitration with the hope of getting a favorable decision or a good settlement from management.

Who has the power and authority to resolve the issue?

It's not always clear who in management can resolve an issue. Often stewards are tempted to pressure the closest human resources representative they can find. But if these are not the people who can change things, you are wasting a lot of energy and time on the wrong targets. It may take some probing to find out who in management has the final say on an issue, but it's time well spent.

Besides grievances, how else can we resolve this problem?

Sometimes even an arbitrator's decision won't achieve the result that the union wants. It might be time for a demonstration or other ways to draw attention to the problem. Think strategically about other alternatives. Sometimes it takes something other than a hammer to nail management's bad decisions to the wall.

By Ken Margolies. Adapted and reprinted with permission from Steward Update, Volume 24, Number 5

Staffing Issues

Staffing issues are on the rise in every agency but it seems that DCFS is being hit the worst right now. Part of the issue is getting the agencies to post vacancies; the other part is trying to find qualified individuals to apply for the positions. Once a position is posted it takes forever to get it filled. These issues have been brought up at labor management meetings on a statewide level to no avail. I have asked Sara Dorner, President of Rockford United Labor, to set up a meeting with Senator Steve Stadelman, and Representatives Maurice West and Dave Vella so that our executive board can discuss this matter with them and see if there is anything they can do to influence the process. Stay tuned for updates!

Bad Addresses

If you move don't forget to let your steward know your new address or send an email to Alice Sutherland at presidentafscmelocal448@gmail.com. Each month we get several newsletters back because members have moved, and we don't have an updated address. Member's if you know of someone who has moved make sure to reach out to them and let them know they need to update their address with us. We want everyone to stay informed.

Pumpkin Spice Latte Coffee Cake

Ingredients

- 2 1/2 cups white whole wheat flour
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 3/4 cup white sugar
- 3/4 cup canola oil
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin spice seasoning
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup pumpkin puree
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1/4 cup brewed expressor or strong coffee
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup finely chopped pecans

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350
- Mix adding flour, brown sugar, white sugar, vegetable oil, salt and pumpkin pie seasoning. Mix together until combined.
- Remove 1 1/2 cup of mixture and add to a small bowl, this is for your topping.
- Next add finely chopped pecans to the topping mixture in the small bowl and then add cinnamon. Stir topping and set aside
- Then mix milk, pumpkin puree, brewed expressor or coffee, egg, baking soda and baking powder
- Mix at slow speed until there are no more lumps
- Grease and flour a 9" springform cake pan (or you could use a 13"x9" glass pan) and add cake batter.
- Next evenly spread pecan topping over batter.
- Place in oven for 55-60 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean-for springform pan. If using a glass 13"x9" pan, bake for 35-40 minutes.

Enjoy!

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