

Opportunities for Financial Aid for Higher Education

By Matt Utecht, President

There are several scholarship and grant opportunities available to UFCW Local 653 members and their dependents.

The **Minnesota AFL-CIO** sponsors scholarships for high school seniors graduating in 2017. The three requirements for these Minnesota AFL-CIO scholarships are:

- You must be a union member or a dependent of a union member whose local union is affiliated with the Minnesota AFL-CIO.
- You must have a straight "B" average or better (2.0 in a 3.0 grade point system/3.0 in a 4.0 grade point system).
- You must attend a post-secondary institution located within the state of Minnesota.

The scholarship deadline is April 30, 2017. Winners will be selected by lot by the Minnesota AFL-CIO Education Committee. The MN AFL-CIO also offers Labor Leadership grants, which are available for members of affiliated unions seeking to develop their abilities and skills as union leaders. The grants help defray the cost of classes, programs or conferences sponsored or endorsed by the AFL-CIO or affiliated organizations.

For more information and entry forms for any of these scholarships/grants, go to: <http://www.mnafcio.org/about/scholarships-awards>.

Nellie Stone Johnson Scholarship - Available to racial minority students from union families attending or planning to attend one of the technical colleges, community colleges and/or state universities in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System. Scholarship deadline is June 1. For more information, go to: www.nelliestone.org.



UFCW CHARITY FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

*Education is the most powerful weapon which you
can use to change the world. —Nelson Mandela*

In 2017 the UFCW Charity Foundation will award several SCHOLARSHIPS, up to \$8,000 each, to UFCW members or their unmarried dependents under the age of 20.

For more information, and to find out if you are eligible, please visit:
www.ufcwcharityfoundation.org/scholarship

The scholarship application will be available online
from February 6-May 8, 2017.



If you are unable to apply online, you may request an application by mail at UFCW Charity Foundation,
Attn: Scholarship Program, 1775 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006
or by e-mail at cfscholarship@ufcw.org.
If you need the scholarship rules or an application in another language,
please contact us at 1-800-551-4010 and we will obtain assistance for you.
UFCW employed officers, staff, and their immediate families are not eligible.

(See page 8 for Spanish version of above flyer.)

Watch for **Local 653 Educational Grant** application forms in the April and May Fact Finders and at the Local 653 website (www.ufcw653.org) at that time.

Walmart - Spending Our Money So They Can Live Better

By Paul Crandall, Secretary-Treasurer

So the retail giant is at it again. It has not been a secret that this company has made its business practice to come into municipalities and seek tax breaks and incentives so they can build a superstore, only to quickly dump expenses back to the citizens at the taxpayers' expense. Recent efforts lead by State Representative Mike Nelson (DFL-Brooklyn Park) and State Representative John Lesch (DFL-St. Paul) brought this issue to the legislature and have called attention to other legislators just how much Walmart is costing taxpayers and local municipalities. I thought it would be informative to share this article on Walmart overusing police resources. I want to credit both of these Representatives for calling out the giant for their business practices. ***Please share these facts with your local city councils and state representatives.*** This article was taken from the Crystal-Robbinsdale Sun Post dated December 22, 2016.

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Legislators Say Walmart Overusing Police Resources

by Kevin Miller

A few Twin Cities Walmart stores are displacing security costs on the public, according to Rep. Mike Nelson (DFL-Brooklyn Park) and Rep. John Lesch (DFL-St. Paul). Rather than hiring their own private security to deal with low-level crimes such as theft and shoplifting, they rely on city police forces for their security needs at the public's expense, they said.

"Right now, Walmart is consuming an inordinate share of [city] resources, and that's why it needs to be addressed," Lesch said.

"They're the problem child in Minnesota retail," Lesch said. Walmart locations in St. Paul, Bloomington, Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park made 4,958 calls to police between Oct. 1, 2015 and Oct. 1, 2016, at a total public cost estimated to be slightly more than \$3 million. Of these stores, the St. Paul location made 2,129 calls, Bloomington made 1,250, Brooklyn Center made 1,099, and Brooklyn Park made 480.

"A lot of the time, when Walmart comes into cities, they ask for tax breaks, they ask for other incentives so they can build there, and their thing is, 'Well, we're going to provide jobs,'" Nelson said. "Well, they're not providing that many jobs, they're not providing well-paying jobs, and

then they're dumping their security problems back on the city resources," he said.

"It's astonishing how much these two stores, one in Brooklyn Center and one in Brooklyn Park, draw the resources of our cities," Nelson said.

"No retailer is immune to the challenge of crime, and we are investing in people and technology to support our stores," Walmart wrote in a statement.

"The important reason why this is a statewide issue and why the Legislature needs to address this, is because Walmart is such a large actor that the average municipality does not have the resources and sophistication to combat their tactics," Lesch said. "This has happened around the country, when they refer their employees instead of paying for health insurance, they refer their employees out to the taxpayer dime to pay for health care," he said.

They want to see Walmart hire more private security and reduce the number of calls they make to police departments, Lesch said.

Nelson and Lesch will be seeking a legislative hearing to bring in police chiefs and city government to hear their perspective, Lesch said.

Other states have addressed this issue, but have not succeeded in passing any legislation, Lesch said. However, smaller, piecemeal efforts have succeeded, he said. “The resource burden tends to fall at the local level, so there have been municipalities across the nation that have done those,” he said.

Walmart has a program it calls Restorative Justice that diverts first time offenders away from the court system, which is administered by third-party vendors like Corrective Education Company (CEC). Participants in the program take an educational course.

Lesch said that this in-house, private justice program offers a fee structure the alleged shoplifters can pay instead of going to court. He said the lack of government oversight and due process is problematic, and Walmart has not disclosed how often these programs are or are not used in the state. Walmart also has not disclosed the cost of the program for participants.

“This should cause anyone in the criminal justice system grave concern,” Lesch said. “We’re encouraged by a 35 percent reduction in calls to law enforcement agencies nationwide, on average, since we began implementing crime deterrence programs like Restorative Justice and More at the Door,” Walmart wrote in a statement. More at the Door is an effort by Walmart to increase staffing at the front of the store to deter shoplifters. “We’ll continue our outreach to law enforcement in Minnesota and across the country as part of our ongoing commitment to meet our customers’ and associates’ expectations of a safe and enjoyable shopping experience,” the statement read.

“They say it’s a restorative justice program, but it’s anything but that,” said Kathleen Woodruff, general organizer for Making Change at Walmart, a campaign run by the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union. “They essentially bring someone back

into a room and intimidate them into signing a statement of guilt and paying \$500 within three months,” she said.

CEC has been sued by the San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera for false imprisonment and extortion.

“I just really feel that Walmart needs to step up as the largest employer in the nation, that makes billions of dollars in profit, my taxpayer dollars should not be going to subsidize their bottom line,” said Brooklyn Park resident and Human Rights Commission Chair Linda Freemon. “They should not be sponging off the community where they do business.”

Lesch said unlike some other big box retailers, Walmart doesn’t seem interested in deterring shoplifting.

“They just say, ‘Well, you know, if this happens to us, we’ll chalk this up as a loss and call municipal resources to deal with it where we can,’” he said.

The United Food and Commercial Workers International Union released a TV commercial condemning Walmart and its security practices Dec. 15.



Rep. John Lesch, right, holds a years’ worth of documents related to Walmart police calls. Linda Freemon left is a Brooklyn Park resident. (Sun Post staff photo by Kevin Miller)

Wilson McShane Corporation



Image courtesy of AHA

American Heart Month

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in both women and men in the United States. Along with Valentine's Day, February marks American Heart Month, which is a wonderful time to commit to a healthy lifestyle and make small changes that lead to a lifetime of heart health.

Research suggests that maintaining a healthy weight, engaging in physical activity, eating healthy, not smoking, and keeping your stress low can reduce your chances of heart disease by 80%.

Weight Management:

If you have too much fat, especially around your waist area, you are at risk of heart disease. The benefits of maintaining a healthy weight include having better regulation of bodily fluids and blood pressure, reducing the burden on your heart and circulatory system, and lowering your risk for heart disease and certain cancers.

Physical Activity:

Becoming more active can reduce your risk of heart attack. The American Heart Association recommends just 40 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic exercise (i.e., a brisk walk) three to four times a week. Physical activity lowers your risk of heart disease as it:

- Prevents and manages high blood pressure
- Reduces coronary heart disease
- Reduces risk of stroke
- Establishes good heart health habits
- Relieves stress and tension
- Enhances your immune system which decreases the risk of developing heart disease and cancer

Eating Healthy/Cholesterol Control:

Cholesterol is a waxy substance that our bodies use to make cell membranes and some hormones. However, if you have too much bad cholesterol, it can combine with white blood cells and form plaque in your veins

and arteries. These blockages lead to heart disease. The following is a list of foods that will help lower your cholesterol:

- Whole and multi-grain products such as bran and oats
- Fatty fish like salmon, mackerel and albacore tuna
- Foods rich in antioxidants such as fruits and vegetables
- Foods high in omega-3 fatty acids such as avocado, flax seeds, olive oil, and canola oil
- Foods rich in plant sterols like nuts, walnuts and almonds

The following is a list of foods to avoid or to consume only in moderation:

- Animal products high in saturated fat such as beef, lamb, veal, pork, duck, cream, cheese, butter and egg yolk
- Fried foods
- High-fat processed meats like hot dogs and sausages
- Simple sugars found in soft drinks, candy, cakes, cookies and other baked goods
- Saturated oils such as coconut and palm oil
- Shortening, partially hydrogenated margarine and lard

Quit Smoking:

Smoking causes approximately 30% of all heart disease and strokes. Smoking damages your blood vessels and makes your blood sticky which can lead to blood clots. Nicotine also makes your heart rate and blood pressure raise significantly. If you quit smoking, your chances of a heart attack drop by more than 50% and your risk continues to drop each year you are not a smoker.

Reduce stress:

Stress affects all of us in different ways, none of which are beneficial to our health. Studies suggest that chronic stress can cause an increase in heart rate and blood pressure which may damage the artery walls.

Following are ten ways of reducing stress in your daily life:

1. Talk with family or friends
2. Engage in physical activity
3. Accept the things you cannot change
4. Remember to laugh
5. Give up bad habits like smoking, drinking, eating unhealthy foods
6. Slow down
7. Get enough sleep
8. Get organized
9. Practice giving back
10. Try not to worry

One in every four deaths is due to heart disease and there is no better time than today to start taking your heart health seriously. Following the guidelines above can make a significant difference in your heart and overall health.

UFCW Local 653 Member-to-Member Outreach Program

By Rena Wong, Director of Organizing

Hy-Vee Ingredients:

- \$9.3 billion revenue
- 240 stores in 8 states
- 25 nonunion stores in five years in the Twin Cities market to compete directly with home-grown stores like Cub Foods, Lunds & Byerlys, Kowalski's, and Festival Foods
- Millions of Minnesota cities' tax dollars given away with no guarantees to provide good jobs

These three Local 653 members will be visiting stores from February 1 to April 30 to educate and activate fellow members.

- Erik Hasse, Rockford Road Cub Foods
- Anthony Lanners, Andover Festival Foods
- Cassy Hanson, Maple Grove Cub Foods



Erik Hasse



Anthony Lanners



Cassy Hanson

Get the Facts on Hy-Vee

Hy-Vee

[hī-vee] *noun*:
1. An out-of-state, big-box grocery store that competes with local and small businesses.
Also see: Wal-Mart

Employee-owned?

"Employee owned" is misleading. You "own" by putting your own money into the company's 401k plan.

For that "ownership," hard-working families get none of the benefits of a union contract like negotiated raises, retirement security and stable schedules.

Bad Use of Your Tax Dollars

Hy-Vee's expansion in our state is being funded by your tax dollars.

A \$4.7 million tax giveaway was approved for their store in Robbinsdale and a \$1.1 million tax giveaway for their store in Columbia Heights.

Those tax dollars could have gone into our schools or other public services.

TAKE ACTION:

Stop Hy-Vee from lowering our community's standards.
Join UFCW Local 653's Rapid Response Network
To learn more visit www.ufcw653.org

Call UFCW Local 653 at 763-525-1500

Find us on the web at www.ufcw653.org

UFCW Local 653
6160 Summit Dr. North
Suite 600
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430

The Clock Is Ticking.

If You're Going to Do It, Now Is the Time

By Doug Rigert, Union Representative



Last June I took the time to write about a topic in the monthly Fact Finder newsletter that is too important not to address again. The topic is that which involves “grace weeks” and the changes which will affect many of you who receive health care benefits or coverage from your employer. These are the same benefits that were negotiated on your behalf by the leadership of UFCW Local 653. As many of you are aware, there were some changes from the last Minneapolis Retail Union Contract to the current contract that became effective March 6, 2016. Two of those changes involve employer as well as eligible employee contributions to health and welfare effective March 5, 2017. Beginning on that date, for all eligible employees the employer will make increased weekly contributions. For full-time employees it will be an additional \$50.85, for a total of \$210.65 per week. For eligible part-time employees (modified part-time) it will be an additional \$59.99, for a total of \$116.89 per week. As mentioned earlier, all eligible employees will also have to make a weekly contribution for health and welfare effective March 5, 2017. For full-time employees it will be \$10.00 per week and for modified part-time employees it will be \$5.00 per week. Your classification (full-time, modified part-time, part-time) is designated pursuant to the collective bargaining agreement.

If you are an eligible employee currently receiving health and welfare benefits, it is **very important** for you to know or find out at least one or two weeks before March 5, 2017, how many “grace weeks” you have, and if need be to purchase them back before that date. What are grace weeks? Grace weeks are best described as simply the number of weeks of extended health insurance you would have if you’re out of work for any of the five defined leaves of absence stated in the union contract, or if you have exhausted or didn’t qualify for the benefits afforded under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which allows you to be out of work for up to twelve weeks. If you qualify for FMLA, your employer will continue to make contributions to health and welfare on your behalf and you won’t have to use any of your existing grace weeks unless you are out of work more than 12 weeks. It is important to remember, however,

that as of March 5, 2017, if you are out on qualified FMLA you will be responsible for making your weekly employee contribution for health and welfare directly to your employer for the week(s) you are gone and NOT to Wilson-McShane Corp.

The five defined leaves of absence in the union contract are personal leave, union leave, military leave, medical leave and parenting leave. The maximum number of grace weeks any one person can have is eight. The more grace weeks you have, the longer you will have extended health insurance benefits. Between now and the end of February 2017 if you discover you don’t have all eight grace weeks, it would be smart, if you can afford it, to purchase back as many of them at the current rate of \$159.80 per week if you are a full-time employee versus the new increased rate effective March 5, 2017, of \$210.65. This would save you \$50.85 for each week you buy back. The same point can be made if you are a modified part-time employee with less than all eight grace weeks. If so, it would also save you considerable money as well to purchase as many of them at the current rate of \$56.90 per week versus the new increased rate effective March 5, 2017, of \$116.89; this would save you \$59.99 for each week you buy back. It is also important to note that grace weeks can only be purchased back if you are working; they cannot be purchased while you are out on leave or out on FMLA. As you can see, this could save you or an eligible coworker a whole lot of money, but timing is everything so you must act quickly. It would be wise and financially in your best interest to find out how many grace weeks you have well before the new rates go into effect, and if need be to purchase them back at a significant savings to you. The cost to buy back a grace week is based on the employer contribution rate in place at the time of purchase, not when the grace week is used.

To find out how many grace weeks you have and how to properly purchase them if needed, please contact Wilson-McShane Corporation at 952-851-5797. You can also find out by visiting the newly redesigned and user-friendly UFCW MRM Local 653 benefits website at www.653benefits.com.

February 2017

Member News and Events



La educación es el arma más poderosa que usted puede usar para cambiar el mundo. —Nelson Mandela

En el año 2017 la UFCW Charity Foundation otorgará varias becas de hasta \$8,000 a los miembros de la UFCW o sus dependientes no casados menores de 20 años de edad.

Para más información y averiguar si usted es elegible, visite:

www.ufcwcharityfoundation.org/scholarship

La solicitud de beca estará disponible en línea comenzando del 6 de febrero al 8 de mayo de 2017.



Si no le es posible presentar la solicitud en línea, puede pedir una solicitud por correo a la UFCW Charity Foundation, Attn: Scholarship Program, 1775 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006 o por correo electrónico a scholarship@ufcw.org. Si usted necesita las reglas de la beca o una aplicación en otro idioma, por favor contáctenos al 1-800-551-4010 y obtendremos ayuda para usted. Los directivos, el personal de la UFCW y sus familias inmediatas no son elegibles para las becas.

Service Pins Sent Out January 2017

10 Years

Phlandus Alexander (Jerry's Foods—Eden Prairie)
James Dagen (Festival Foods—Bloomington)
Beth Miller (Jerry's Foods—Eden Prairie)

15 Years

Nancy Grace (King's County Market—St. Francis)

20 Years

Joelle Lange (Cub—Minnetonka)
Ann Scanlon (Jerry's Cub—Rogers)

25 Years

Neal Baxter (L&B—Uptown Lake Street)
Lorenzo Borela (Jerry's Cub—Bloomington)
Ross Mick (L&B—50th Street Edina)
Connie Montierth (L&B Manufacturing)
Jane Watts (L&B Manufacturing)
Anita Zehowski (L&B—Minnetonka)

30 Years

Steve Ohnesorge (Cub—Coon Rapids South)
Frank Peterson (Jerry's Cub—Lake Street)

35 Years

Jeffrey Fox (Bergan's Supervalu)

40 Years

Matthew Groth (Bergan's Supervalu)
Steve Kruse (Jerry's Cub—Southdale)
Pamela Ramm (Jerry's Cub—Southdale)
Brian Schroeder (Jerry's Cub—Rogers)

45 Years

Steve Elfner (L&B—Uptown Lake Street)

UFCW Local 653
6160 Summit Dr N, Suite 600
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430
www.ufcw653.org
763-525-1500 or 1-800-292-4105

Matthew P. Utecht, President (mutecht@ufcw653.org, 612-965-4307)

Paul Crandall, Secretary-Treasurer (paulc@ufcw653.org, 612-965-4301)

Brainerd / Baxter Cub Foods - Baxter Super One - Crosby Super One - Pequot Lakes Supervalu - Lunds & Byerlys St. Cloud

Rena Wong, Director of Organizing (rwong@ufcw653.org, 612-865-4345)

Amber Allen, Union Representative (ambera@ufcw653.org, 612-865-6755)

CORPORATE CUB FOODS: Apple Valley, Bloomington, Burnsville HOTC, Burnsville South, Chanhassen, Eagan East, Eagan North, Eagan West, Lakeville North, Lakeville South, Lakeville West, Rosemount, Savage, Shorewood

Scott Larson, Union Representative (scottl@ufcw653.org, 612-961-6305)

LUNDS & BYERLYS: Bloomington, Central, Edina, Hennepin, Lake Street, Minnetonka, Navarre, Plymouth, Prior Lake, Richfield, Wayzata, Lunds & Byerlys Kitchen, Lunds Manufacturing
Villa at Bryn Mawr, Senova (Bryn Mawr), Healthcare Services (Bryn Mawr)

Rick Milbrath, Union Representative (rmilbrath@ufcw653.org, 612-965-4310)

Ingebretsen's - Swanson Meats - Cooper's Foods - Almsted's Fresh Market - Jubilee Foods - Cub Foods Shakopee - Driskill's Foods - Oxendale's Market - Bergan's SuperValu - Hirshfield's - Brede Exposition Services
KNOWLAN'S FESTIVAL FOODS: Andover, Bloomington, Brooklyn Park
KING'S COUNTY MARKET: Andover, St. Francis
KOWALSKI'S MARKETS: Chicago (Parkview), Eagan, Eden Prairie, Excelsior, Hennepin, Lyndale
JERRY'S FOODS: Meat Masters
Golden Living Center (Bloomington and Chateau), Healthcare Services (Bloomington and Chateau)

Doug Rigert, Union Representative (dougr@ufcw653.org, 612-889-9121)

JERRY'S CUB FOODS: Bloomington, Brookdale, Chaska, Eden Prairie, Knollwood, Lake Street, Nicollet, Quarry, Richfield, Rogers, Southdale, West Broadway
JERRY'S FOODS: Eden Prairie, Edina, Jerry's Enterprises
Benedictine @ Innsbruck Healthcare

Jim Schommer, Union Representative (jims@ufcw653.org, 612-965-4308)

CORPORATE CUB FOODS: Blaine North, Blaine South, Blaine West, Brooklyn Park North, Brooklyn Park South, Champlin, Coon Rapids South, Crystal, Fridley, Lagoon, Maple Grove, Monticello, New Brighton, Rockford Road, Silver Lake Road, Vicksburg
Homestead at Anoka, Gold Cross, Monarch Healthcare

Ondrea Shallbetter, Union Representative/Organizing Dept. (ondreas@ufcw653.org, 612-406-9419)

CUB FOODS: Plymouth Station, St. Louis Park

Nancy Vaillancourt, Union Representative (nancyv@ufcw653.org, 612-965-4309)

LUNDS & BYERLYS: Burnsville, Chanhassen, Eagan, Eden Prairie, Edina, Glen Lake, Golden Valley, Maple Grove, Ridgedale, St. Louis Park
HAUG'S - Cub Coon Rapids (Williston), Cub Minnetonka (Haug), Cub Waterford
JERRY'S CUB: Elk River
Everett's Foods
Park Health & Rehab, Healthcare Services at Park H&R



Working Off the Clock?

By Rick Milbrath, Union Representative

Three things are a given in life: death, taxes and cutting of hours after the first of January in the retail world.

The discussion in the stores, on the phone and in the office these days is not only the lack of help but also the shortage of hours that are being scheduled. We have members calling asking for seniority lists to find out if they are in the top 24 percent. Members are complaining that there aren't enough hours to get everything done properly, and just the stress that everyone is feeling to get more and more done. Each and every member should make sure that they are giving their employer an hour's worth of work for an hour's worth of pay. What you should not do is work off the clock.

This past month I have received a couple of phone calls from members reporting that they know of people who are working off the clock. You may think that you are doing the company a favor, but in reality you are not. If you are caught, both you and your employer could be in a great deal of trouble. We all know that the government runs off of our taxes. When we don't get paid for our work, the government doesn't get their money either. If the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor would conduct an investigation and find that you are not getting paid for all hours worked, they could level a fine against your employer. Also, during their investigation they could be looking for any overtime issues, minors working past time limits, and any number of other issues. Believe me, your employer doesn't want to deal with the government any more than they have to.

Another reason you shouldn't work off the clock is because if you would happen to get hurt while you are working, the company would not be responsible for any lost wages or any medical expenses that you may incur. This would become 100% your responsibility. You would be giving up all of your legal rights under the Workers' Compensation Laws.

The third reason, and you may not realize it, but you are stealing from your fellow employees. Every hour that you work and don't get paid is one less hour that your employer has to schedule someone to work. Treat every hour that you are scheduled as a valuable asset. Most part-time employees rely and depend on every hour they can get.

As I said earlier, you may think that you are doing the company a favor or even feel the need to work off the clock so that everything gets done, but as you can see, you are not only putting yourself at risk, but also your employer. It certainly isn't worth the trouble. You could end up getting disciplined or even fired.

Executive Board Members	
Matthew P. Utecht, President	Nick Stute, Vice President 5
Paul Crandall, Secretary-Treasurer	Melissa Charles, Vice President 6
Judi Johnson, Recording Secretary	Michael Gaulrapp, Vice President 7
David Maas, Vice President 1	John Pignato, Vice President 8
Doug Dehmer, Vice President 2	Chris Erickson, Vice President 9
Theresa Kick, Vice President 3	Mark Husbyn, Vice President 10
Lorrie Wayman, Vice President 4	

Northwest Suburbs Community and Labor Coalition 2017 Strategic Planning Meeting

By Jim Schommer, Union Representative

Back in September I wrote about the Northwest Suburbs Community and Labor Coalition (NWSCLC), in which I represent UFCW Local 653. We held a community open house and resource fair. This group met for the first time in February 2016. The NWSCLC table consists of community leaders, community activists, religious leaders, organization leaders, nonprofits and union members.

Currently, coalition allies are exploring three main concerns: low wage worker issues, civic engagement, and education. Some of the events that were held in 2016 were the primary candidate forums in Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center, community resource fair, community engagement activities, town hall meetings and post-primary candidate forums. We had a busy 2016, however, we want to do even more in 2017.

We started out 2017 with a meet-and-greet dinner that was held at African Career Education and Resource, Inc. (ACER) on January 13. We ate traditional African food and had the chance to visit with each other and the new coalition members. It was a very pleasant evening.

Our Strategic Planning Meeting was held on January 14. This meeting started with opening remarks from Chelsie Glaubitz, President of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation. She talked about the recent elections and how we can't retreat, we need to be on the offense and we are doing that by getting involved in communities and building relationships with each other in this time of change. We discussed 2016 successes and challenges. We did some exercises in mapping power--Who has the power in Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center to help us make changes? We did some relationship-building activities where we learned about each person or organization and why they were involved. We discussed our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It was a very informative and interesting day. There was a good deal of discussion on our direction for the future. We all agreed that with the results of the election, we would wait and see what the first 30 days of the new presidency would bring us and then make decisions on what direction we need to go. If you would like to get involved, please contact me at the union office at 763-525-1500.

Your Weingarten Rights

In 1975, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, in the Weingarten decision, that an employee is entitled to have a union representative present during any interview which may result in his or her discipline. It is up to you to insist on union representation. If you fail to do so, you may waive your rights.

If you are called into a meeting with any management representative and have reason to believe that disciplinary action may result, read them your Weingarten rights:

"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, I respectfully request that my union representative or steward be present at this meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions."

Do the following:

1. Ask your supervisor if you might be disciplined as a result of the interview. If he/she says "No," ask for a written statement to that effect. If he/she gives you such a statement, you must participate in the interview. If not, read him/her your Weingarten rights, remain for the meeting, take notes, and afterwards immediately contact your union representative.
2. If he/she says you might be disciplined but will not allow you to have a union representative present, read him your Weingarten rights, stay in the room, take notes, and do not respond to any questions. Afterwards, contact your union representative immediately. If the supervisor allows your union representative to be present, you should participate in the interview.

Procedures for Time Off

By Scott Larson, Union Representative

All approved vacation planners are to be posted no later than March 15 for the following 12 months. Many members over the last year have inquired about their desire to take additional weeks off that were not selected on the vacation planner. Also, when they asked for the time off, their employer has denied their request stating that it is not on the vacation planner.

So let's clarify your ability to take additional weeks of vacation **after** the posting of the vacation planner. If no other member within your classification has selected the week you desire to have off, you must notify your employer prior to the posting of the two-week schedule and follow all other company policies for requesting time off in order to get paid. I would recommend doing this sooner rather than later and in writing. Here are a couple of examples:

1. A journeyman meat cutter has selected the first week of May off on the vacation planner and you are a service employee wanting the same week as the journeyman meat cutter and no other service employee

has selected that week off on the vacation planner.

2. A full-time food handler has selected the first week of June on the posted vacation planner and you are a part-time employee requesting the first week of June and no other part-time employee is on the vacation planner for the first week of June.

In both of these examples, the employer **must grant** the requested vacation time. For both of these examples you must notify the employer in writing **prior** to the posting of the two-week schedule and follow all other company policies for requesting time off in order to get paid. Furthermore, it is important to point out that vacation time off requests for weeks where nobody in their job classification has already selected and been approved for that same time off on the posted vacation planner are on a first-come first-served basis. It is not based on seniority.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your union representative or call the office at 763-525-1500.

“Saving Jobs, Dreams, and Lives” – John Sanchelli



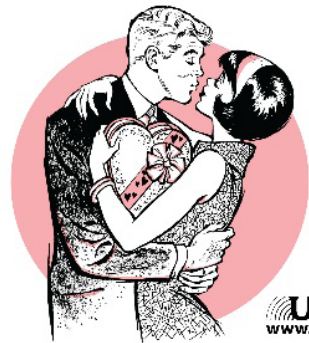
Providing short term mental & chemical health assessment and daily living tools for union members and their families since 1987.

651-642-0182

Available 24 Hours a Day

800-634-7710

Shopped Union... got the girl.



Looking for a Valentine Gift Idea?

By Ondrea Shallbetter, Union Representative

When you're searching for something sweet for that special someone on Valentine's Day, why not **buy union-made-in-America treats** for them?

Here are a few choices of tasty treats made by union members of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW). As with a lot of traditionally union-made products, more are being cross-produced (union/nonunion; US/Mexico), so be sure to read labels to ensure that your candy is union-made in the United States.

Chocolate:

- Ghirardelli chocolates
 - All filled & non-filled squares
 - Chocolate chips
- Hershey's
 - KitKats/Baby Ruth, etc.

Candy:

- Smarties

Beverages:

- Andre champagne
- Arbor Mist
- C.K Mondavi Pinot Grigio
- Turning Leaf Chardonnay

(UFCW Int. Blog, 2015)

Nonunion Competitors

By Amber Allen, Union Representative

Did you know that by shopping a nonunion competitor you could be hurting yourself? With the buzz lately about the two new competitors in our area--Hy-Vee and Fresh Thyme-- I know many of you have checked them out, and some even frequently shop those stores. By spending even a small amount of your hard-earned money in those stores you could be potentially hurting your own pocketbook.

There are many negative impacts of putting money in those stores, including Target and Walmart. The main negative impact that comes to mind and is really hitting our members hard right now is the lack of hours in our stores. In the retail business the hours for payroll are dictated mainly by the estimated store sales, and obviously, after the holidays and several months into the New Year, most retail stores see their slowest time of the year, and with that history that is why hours are cut. After the holidays many people are forced to or choose to cut back on nonessential spending; however, there are some items we can't go without, including groceries. By spending any amount of money at a nonunion competitor you are contributing to the loss of sales at your own company, which contributes to a spiral effect of negative impacts including--and probably most importantly--to some of your own scheduled hours!

It is a simple task--shop where you work! Many of you don't realize the impact you could have on your company's success and in turn your success, by doing this one simple thing. Shop union and shop local.

It All Started in the Bakery

By Nancy Vaillancourt, Union Representative

One of the most rewarding parts of my job is getting to know members on a personal level. I enjoy hearing stories about their families, hobbies and other jobs. I have been calling on Cub in Elk River for the past three years. About a year and a half ago I was having a conversation with Dave Willkom from the bakery. We were discussing motorcycles, and to my surprise I learned that his wife--Lynn Willkom from produce--had her own motorcycle. I have wanted my own cycle for a few years as I love riding. I couldn't wait to talk to Lynn about how great I thought it was she rode her own bike. During our conversation, I learned that Lynn's daughter Jenny Ohotto (in pricing) and her husband Jarod also ride motorcycles. Jenny told me that she and her husband have been taking road trips with Dave and Lynn for the past three years. I asked Lynn if she would share road trip pictures with me so that I could write an article on their family trips for the Fact Finder.

After months of talking about it, Lynn, Jenny and I sat down to discuss their adventures. I was expecting to be writing about motorcycles, however, that was not the case--this story was going to be even better. I learned that all four of them were single when they started working at

Cub. The "real" story all started in the bakery. Surprising and fun things can and did happen in that bakery so many years ago. Lynn started at Jerry's 20 years ago, Dave 23 years ago, and Jenny 18 years ago. Jarod also worked at Jerry's, where he and Jenny met. Jarod is the only one who no longer works at Jerry's. Love is in the bakery air. Once Dave and Lynn started dating, Lynn moved out of the bakery because they couldn't have the same vacation days. They have now been married 11 years, and Jenny and Jarod have been married 12 years and have two children--Rachelle (11) and Nikolai (9).

Dave rides a 2003 Heritage Softail bike. Lynn started riding her own Honda Shadow 12 years ago and traded it for a 2006 Sportster 1200. Jarod has a 2014 Street Bob. Jenny is hoping to get her own bike in the near future. (I'm trying to talk her into taking the endorsement class with me this spring or early summer.) The past three summers they have taken off and headed to Wisconsin, taking any route that will keep them out of the rain. They stop at every Harley-Davidson dealership along the way.

Thanks for sharing your story with me. Safe riding! "Keep the rubber down and shiny side up."



Dave and Lynn Willkom and Jenny Ohotto at work.



Jared and Jenny Ohotto and Dave and Lynn Willkom on the road!

**1/2
PRICE!**

Ours Resort - Have We Got a Deal for You!

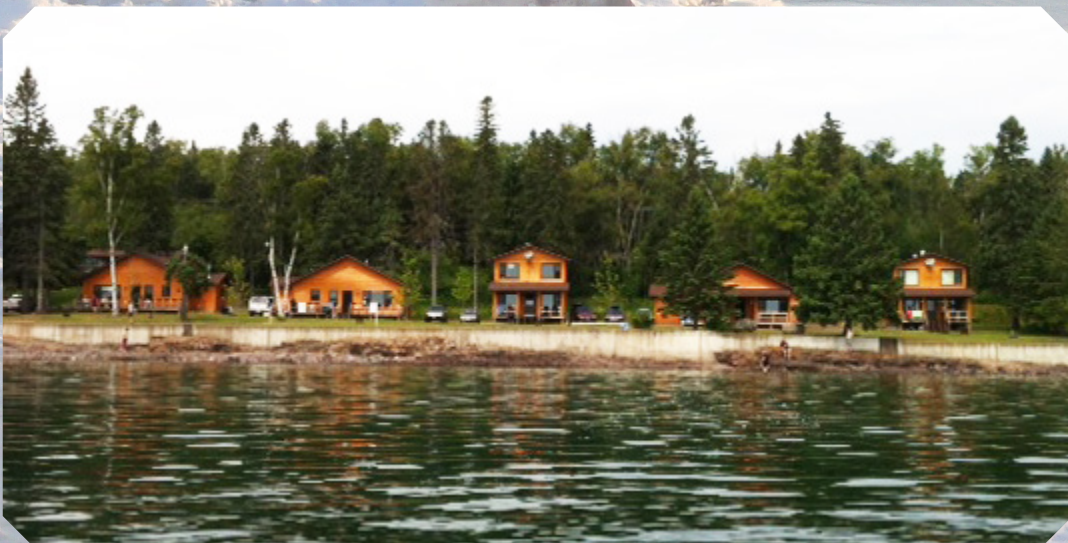


Ours Resort is a special place any time of year, and it's a wonderful destination in the winter. It's located just one mile from the Lutsen Mountains ski resort, which has great ski slopes. There are also nearby snowmobile and cross country ski trails. Even if you're not into outdoor activities, it's hard to beat sitting in front of a nice fire looking out at Lake Superior. Aaaahhhhhh.....

Sound interesting? We're making it even more affordable than usual! Starting December 1, reservations made for stays between January 1 - April 30, 2017, are **HALF PRICE!**

Ours Resort is owned and operated by UFCW Local 653. It consists of six cabins on Lake Superior in Lutsen, MN. Each cabin is fully furnished--you only need to bring your food, clothes, and personal items. (Check our website--www.ufcw653.org--under Member Benefits for more information.)

Ours Resort is available to active, dues-paying members of Local 653 and retired members who are receiving a UFCW Local 653 pension. Call Sandy at the Local 653 office (763-525-1500) today to make your reservations. You'll be glad you did!



UFCW Local 653

Members:

Union Meetings will
be held the first
Monday of each month (October
through May)
at **6:00 p.m.** at Embassy Suites
by Hilton Mpls North, 6300 Earle
Brown Drive in Brooklyn Center.

Upcoming meetings:

Monday, March 6, 2017
Monday, April 3, 2017

SEND IN THE ENTIRE ADDRESS
BOX AT THE RIGHT
FOR A CHANCE TO WIN 2 TICKETS
TO A MINNESOTA TWINS GAME!

All active, dues-paying members
are eligible for drawings.

Mail your entry to:
UFCW Local 653
Attn: Tickets
6160 Summit Dr N, Ste 600
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430



Retirees' Club Meeting Notice

**Knights of Columbus -
Marian Hall**

1114 American Blvd. W.
Bloomington, MN 55420

Thursday, February 16, 2017

10:00 a.m. Cards
12:00 p.m. Lunch
1:00 p.m. Speaker

For more information:

Thea Gullekson:
952-831-3143
Char Hanson:
612-869-9035
or Marlen Wahl:
952-888-3220

United Food & Commercial
Workers Union Local 653
6160 Summit Dr N Ste 600
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430
763-525-1500 or 1-800-292-4105

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2017 ST. PAUL OSMAN

SHRINE CIRCUS

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR COLISEUM

FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 2017

SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 2017

SEND IN THE FORM (BELOW) BY MARCH 10 FOR A CHANCE TO WIN
FOUR TICKETS TO THE CIRCUS!

Mail entry form to:

UFCW Local 653
Attn: Tickets
6160 Summit Dr N, Ste 600
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430

Each Guest Receives:

- BEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE
- FREE COTTON CANDY
- FREE CIRCUS COLORING BOOK
- FREE LIGHT-UP NOVELTY TOY

Member Name:		
Address:		
City/State/Zip		
Phone Number:		
Please circle available time(s):		
Friday, March 31, 2017	7:30 p.m.	
Saturday, April 1, 2017	10:00 a.m.	7:30 p.m.