

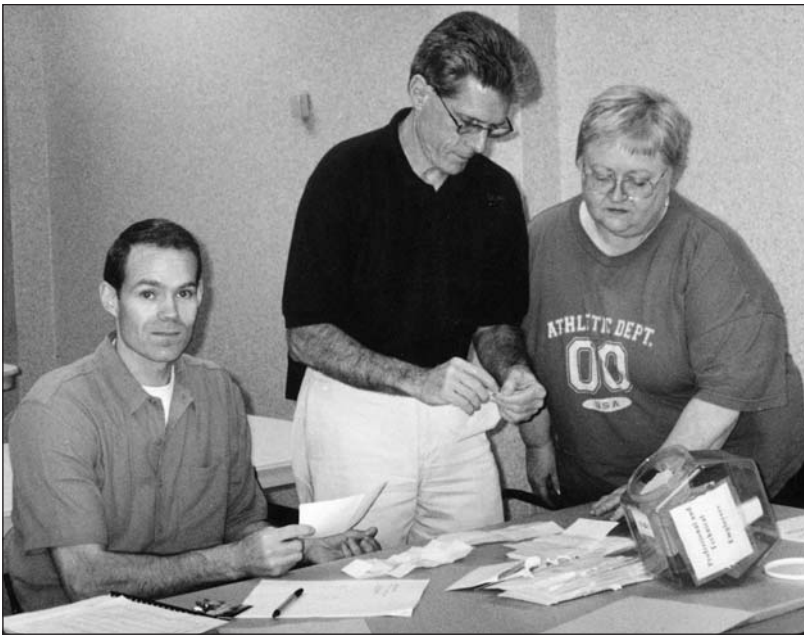
Voice

college union

Cook County College Teachers Union, Local 1600, AFT, AFL-CIO

September 2002 • Vol. 39 No. 1

Harper pro-techs, Moraine Valley staff reach agreements, Morton and Harper faculties face difficult bargaining



Harper College pro-tech leaders **David Dwyer**, chapter chair **Terry Engle** and **Mary Azawi** count union members' ballots after a contract ratification meeting. Members voted overwhelmingly to approve a new four-year contract.

Local delegates shine at AFT Convention

Local 1600's 25 elected delegates played a crucial role at the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Convention in mid-July. Delegates served on every convention committee and introduced resolutions to strengthen social security and Medicare. They spoke at convention sessions that deliberated the resolutions and attended higher education divisional meetings.

Convention delegates re-elected Local 1600 president Norman Swenson as an AFT vice-president to represent community college employees. Swenson also presented the AFT Higher Education Militancy award to Alyssa

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The **Harper pro-techs** faced a crisis in early September 2001. Over 40 percent of the bargaining unit refused to join the union. The prospects of winning a new contract looked grim, but union members Kelly Jones and Terry Engle formed an organizing committee to visit each non-member. Union leaders Mary Azawi, Ron Greenberg and Pat Wenthold set up a series of lunches to explain the union to non-members and prepare for bargaining. The four-month campaign paid off: **the union recruited 45 new members and membership jumped to 90 percent of the bargaining unit.**

The members then appointed a bargaining team of Azawi, Greenberg, Wenthold and Engle. The four of them, along with IFT representative Bob Breving, negotiated four months to win a new contract, and the membership voted 75-3 to ratify the agreement.

The organizers' hard work laid the foundation for winning a four-year contract with average wage hikes of 23 percent over the contract's term. The new agreement provides equity adjustments of \$500 or more to three employees. Their salaries ranked low in comparison with similar job titles in the industry.

Full-time union members will receive \$975 a year in 2006 for professional development expenses such as tuition reimbursement for college courses and seminars, memberships in

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June Executive Board Report



The June board meeting started off with introducing new union officers and chapter chairs. The union members elected three new officers: Stu Sikora, vice-president for suburban faculty, Gail Wiot, vice-president suburban classified, and Perry Buckley, grievance chair. Newly elected chapter chairs from City Colleges security, Harper faculty and pro-techs, Kennedy-King, Olive-Harvey, Triton classified and Wright were also recognized.

Suburban faculty vice-president Stu Sikora reported an arbitration victory in the Harper insurance case. An independent auditor will determine the amount of the award. Gail Wiot, suburban vice-president for support staff, informed the members of the Prairie State arbitration victory on behalf of discharged employee Larry Johnson.



*New members of the Local 1600 executive board pose for the Voice after their first meeting. First row: Triton classified chapter chair **John Rossmiller**, Local 1600 suburban staff vice-president **Gail Wiot**, Kennedy-King chapter chair **Jeanette Williams**, and Local 1600 grievance chair **Perry Buckley**. Back row: Wright chapter chair **Clyde Walker**, Local 1600 suburban faculty vice-president **Stu Sikora**, Olive-Harvey chapter chair **John Harris** and Truman chapter chair **Anthony Johnston**.*

City Colleges vice-president Judith Armstead reported on the layoff of several training specialists and other layoffs due to a cut in the special populations grant. The cut cost many full-time and part-time employees of the City Colleges their jobs. Suburban colleges such as Harper, Morton and Triton also lost positions because of the funding cut.

Armstead also announced a leadership training workshop for October 26, 2002 at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza. Each chapter will be able to send three members to this one-day conference.

Local 1600 president Norman Swenson reported on the status of three important bills: **HB 2370** (30 and Out Retirement bill), **HB 5168** (Pension Enhancement for City Colleges Employees) and **HB 1720** (Organizing Part-time Faculty). Each of these bills passed the legislature. Governor Ryan has 60 days to sign or veto the bills, so Swenson urged union members to write



From the President's Desk
Norman G. Swenson

2002 Illinois elections and members' rights

How could the 2002 Illinois elections impact the rights of Local 1600 members?

In the 1994 election, Republicans gained control of the Illinois House, Senate and Governor's office. Over opposition by Democrats, Republicans ram-rodged through the legislature HB206 that stripped City Colleges and Chicago Public School employees of bargaining rights. School employee unions in Chicago are prohibited from bargaining about layoffs, privatization, class sizes, assignments, academic calendar and many other subjects.

The impact on school employees has been the loss of hundreds of jobs by privatization and layoffs.

What can you do to help Local 1600 endorsed candidates in Illinois Senate races?

- Work a phone bank (the union pays \$10.00 per hour).
- Walk a precinct (the union pays \$50.00 for a half day).
- Mail friend-to-friend cards.
- Place a sign on your lawn.
- Contribute to CCCTU-COPE.
- Vote for union endorsed candidates.

Please call Janie at 1-312-755-9400 to volunteer!

She will assign you to work in a campaign for one of our endorsed candidates!

him on behalf of those bills.

Swenson also talked about actions taken by a coalition of unions representing Chicago Public Schools and the City Colleges. Leaders of these unions have met with representatives of Mayor Daley in an attempt to reach agreement on restoring bargaining rights lost in 1995. He reported some progress in negotiations over the issues, which include privatization of work, seniority rights, academic calendar, teaching assignments and layoffs.

Chapters in Attendance

Daley	Olive-Harvey
Dawson	Oakton
Harper faculty	South Suburban faculty
Harper pro-techs	Triton classified
Kennedy-King	Triton faculty
Malcolm X	Triton mid-management
Moraine Valley faculty	Truman
Moraine Valley staff	Washington
Morton faculty	Wright

Chapters Absent

City Colleges security	Prairie State
Morton staff	South Suburban staff



*Harper faculty negotiating team members **Jim Edstrom, Julie Fleenor, Dom Magno, Patti Ferguson and Michael Harkins** meet prior to the start of negotiations in the spring.*

Continued from page 1.

Agreements and bargaining

professional organizations, subscriptions to professional journals and for purchasing computer software and hardware.

Employees who give the college two years' notice before retirement will receive their unused professional development money as income to enhance their retirement benefit. Also, the college will contribute \$4,400 in 2002 to cover the costs of health insurance for the retiree and spouse for five years.

Technology employees who receive emergency calls to resolve technology problems won a \$200 stipend added to their base salary for work done at home and outside of regular work hours.

Health insurance costs continue to escalate so employees will pay more for prescription drugs. In addition, employees will pay \$10 for each visit to the physician. The Board will continue to contribute 80 percent of the cost of full-family HMO coverage with the employees paying the remaining costs.

Moraine Valley staff negotiated pay raises of 61 cents an hour in year one, 4.9 percent in years two and three of the contract and 4.8 percent in year four. The average salary for support staff will increase 22 percent in four years.

An aggressive negotiating posture kept health insurance costs below what other colleges pay. Rates for the current PPO will top out in 2006 at \$30 a pay period for full-family coverage and \$5 a pay period for the HMO. New employees must wait 120 days to receive health insurance.

Employees with at least nine years seniority, but less than 14 years seniority, will receive a yearly longevity bonus of \$250. Employees with 14 or more years of seniority will receive \$400 a year. The contract also raises the shift differential from 30 cents an hour to 55 cents an hour.

Union negotiators won a unique provision, which requires the college to pay \$1 per hour for employees to be on stand-by status. If employees on stand-by are required to perform work on a computer from home, they will receive overtime pay for the time worked or one hour, whichever is greater. (This language primarily applies to maintenance employees who receive calls at home to correct problems with the heating and air conditioning units of the college.)

Other contract language includes improved disciplinary procedure, expanded rights under the Family Medical Leave Act and

a 20 percent discount for textbooks bought at the college bookstore.

Chapter chair Rose Sakanis led a bargaining team of Gail Wiot, Darlene Kaeding and Renee DeGasso-Skotnik.

Harper, Morton faculty fight hostile Boards

Negotiations on a new contract at **Morton** are moving at a snail's pace. The Board and union have had some "sidebar" negotiations and formal negotiations, but have made little progress on a new contract. Union president Gus Kotoulas sent a letter to each member asking for patience. He said, "Time is on our side, so we are in no hurry to settle the contract unless they meet our initial proposal."

Harper faculty voted to authorize a strike on July 22 and then picketed the board meeting the following night. The union and board remain far apart on salaries and health insurance. The union negotiating team of Julie Fleenor, Mike Harkins, Jim Edstrom, Dom Magno and Patti Ferguson expect a bitter fight to win a new contract.

Union scholarships honor members

When union member Bill McKillop of Daley died and left an \$80,000 contribution for Daley student scholarships, chapter leaders established a charitable foundation to disburse the money. Trustees and union members Mel Anderson, Don Radtke and chapter chair Wendall Wilson set up a 501(c)3 fund, which allows all donations to be tax deductible. The fund also received a contribution in the memory of another deceased faculty member, Bill Barbaro, and generated more money through contributions from Daley faculty and staff.

This year the scholarship fund awarded 11 \$1,000 McKillop Schol-

arships on the basis of high academic rank. Daley also awarded scholarships in 2002 in honor of former union members Gerald Jaselski, Carol Walker and Bill Barbaro.

Local 1600 established the **Norman G. Swenson Scholarships** to recognize the union president's commitment to student scholarship. Each year, at the annual union banquet, the local gives 12 \$1,000 scholarships to deserving students in the City Colleges and suburban colleges.

The **Judge Watkins Memorial Scholarships** was established at **Malcolm X College** to honor the former vice-president of Local

1600. Another scholarship honors former chapter chair Emmet Cosey.

Morton faculty has scholarships named after retired faculty members Stanley Richards and Olga Bush.

In the late 1970s, friends and faculty of Asta Bowen at **Olive-Harvey** established book scholarships on behalf of the former faculty member. Later, the chapter changed the name of the scholarships to the Union Memorial Book Awards.

Truman faculty and friends established scholarships on behalf of former *Voice* editor and Local 1600 grievance chair Leon Novar (see "So long, it's been good to know ya" in this issue), long time union activist Norman Stein and union member Adnes Vidovic. Former chapter chair George Otto established three scholarships in honor of his deceased wife, Maria Otto.

Colleagues of former **Triton** faculty chapter chair John Boyle established a memorial scholarship in his name and the classified named their scholarships after union members Ken Hoehamer and Earl Smith.

Support staff chapters at **Oakton** and **South Suburban** present scholarships to student workers each year.

Chapters at **Harper** faculty, **Kennedy-King**, **Moraine Valley** faculty and staff, **Morton** classified, **Prairie State**, **South Suburban** faculty, **Triton** mid-management, **Washington** and **Wright** have scholarship programs, too.

Local 1600 contributes \$10 each year for each bargaining unit member to each chapter scholarship fund. Last year the local contributed \$25,000 in scholarship money. Each chapter raises money by soliciting members for contributions or holding bake sales, raffles, soliciting local vendors and bookstores and conducting craft shows. For more information about fundraising for scholarships, contact Local 1600 presidential assistant Janie Morrison.



*Truman scholarship committee members **Leo Huang**, committee chair **Kathy Hall**, two student awardees, **George Otto**, Local 1600 vice-president **Judith Armstead** and a representative of a local bank attended the union scholarship luncheon in April.*

COOK COUNTY COLLEGE TEACHERS UNION, LOCAL 1600, AFL-CIO

PresidentNorman Swenson
 Vice-President
 (City Colleges Division).....Judith Armstead
 Vice-President
 (Suburban Faculty).....Stu Sikora
 Vice-President
 (Suburban Staff).....Gail Wiot
 SecretaryVerna Anderson
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 Legislative RepresentativeMarie Caronti
 Grievance ChairmanPerry Buckley

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**The Voice is the winner of eight AFT
 Communications Association Awards in 2001**



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 Member, AFT Communications Association
 and Midwest Labor Press Association.

So long, it's been good to know ya

The refrain from Woody Guthrie's popular song rings in my ears as I write and edit my last issue of the *Voice*. For 17 years, I have written and edited this publication. I will miss this work.

Along the way, I received help and inspiration from a lot of great writers and union leaders. The former executive director of the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT), Oscar Weil, and IFT publications director, Carol Greenwood, taught me to write in a newspaper style.

Over the last 105 issues, I worked with some excellent writers to put out this award winning publication. The previous editor, Leon Novar (Truman), taught me about union printers and guided me through the first few issues. Jim Berg (Olive-Harvey) joined the newspaper in 1984 and worked with me to change the format of the *Voice* to its current magazine format. He also shared his rich knowledge of the union and helped me improve my writing and editing skills.

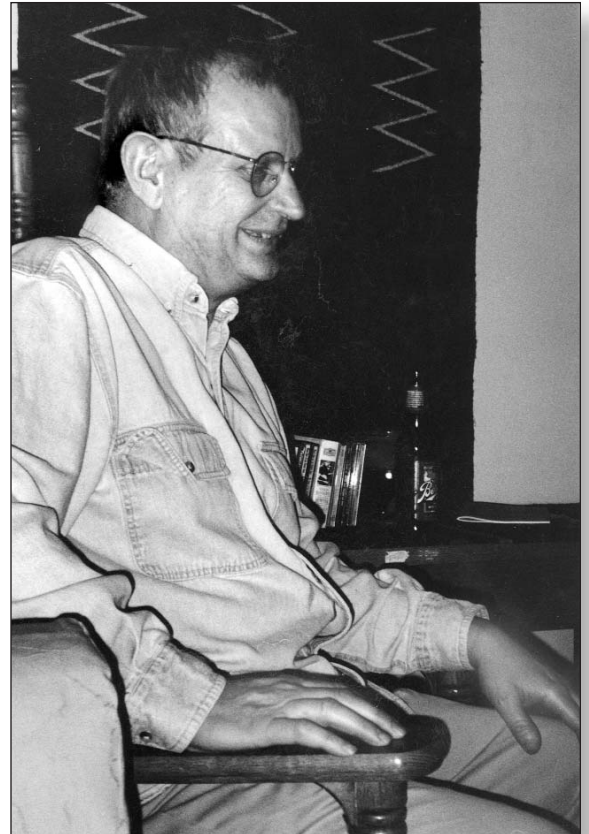
When Jim left, the union hired

Perry Buckley (City-Wide) to write about the City Colleges and John Boyle (Triton) to cover suburban faculty. I wrote about the non-faculty units. Perry and John also left and the union hired Jim O'Malley (Triton) and Claudette Burchett (Malcolm X) and, finally, Rochelle Robinson (Olive-Harvey) replaced Claudette.

Each of them contributed their talents to the newspaper and helped it win over 60 awards for excellence. In 2001 alone, the American Federation of Teachers Communications Association honored the *Voice* with eight awards for general excellence of the publication, best news story, leaflet, feature, photo, political article, layout and column.

Union president Norman Swenson also contributed by writing his timely, award-winning column, "From the President's Desk".

Thanks to all of them and the readers who gave advice and criticism.



Former *Voice* editor **Bob Breving** relaxes after completing his last issue as editor. In his 17-year tenure, Breving edited over 105 issues of the newspaper.

Retiree chapter's luncheon



Retiree **Jim Berg** and his wife **Sue** attended the Retiree chapter's luncheon at Victoria Banquets. They heard a presentation by AFT staff representative John Abraham. Nearly 60 retirees attended the luncheon.

Buying American makes dollars and sense

If you are looking for another reason why you should purchase an American car over a foreign import, consider these recent Cable News Network (CNN) findings. When researching which automakers contributed the most to relief and recovery efforts in New York and Washington, D.C. following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, CNN investigators noticed a disturbing fact. They found the majority of foreign car manufacturers closed their wallets tight, while U.S. automakers donated generously to the charitable efforts. The findings include:

Ford: contributed \$1 million to American Red Cross matching employee contributions. It also offered Emergency Response Teams and office space to displaced government employees.

GM: contributed \$1 million to American Red Cross matching employee contributions. It also

donated a fleet of vans, sports utility vehicles and trucks to relief efforts.

Daimler Chrysler: contributed \$10 million to support the children and victims of 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Harley Davidson: contributed \$1 million and 30 new motorcycles to the New York City Police Department.

Volkswagen: contributed \$2 million to a September 11th foundation created by the employees and management to assist the children and victims of the World Trade Center.

Hyundai: contributed \$300,000 to the American Red Cross.

Apart from the donations of Volkswagen and Hyundai, who clearly showed compassion for the victims of the 9/11 attacks, the other foreign car makers, some of whom enjoyed their highest sales record the month before the attacks, had no problem taking money from Americans, but refused to share it with the victims.

Reprinted from the Federation News

Audi: \$0

Fiat: \$0

Mitsubishi: \$0

Subaru: \$0

BMW: \$0

Honda: \$0

Nissan: \$0

Suzuki: \$0

Daewoo: \$0

Isuzu: \$0

Porsche: \$0

Toyota: \$0



Editor's choice: excellent books on labor leaders

Few union leaders know of our proud history and the great contributions our union leaders have made to the lives of American working people. If you are one of them and want to learn more about the significance and impact of the American labor movement, pick up one of these books:

A. Philip Randolph, Pioneer of the Civil Rights Movement

by Paula Pfeffer

This book about the contributions of one of America's great union leaders talks about Randolph's trials and triumphs in successfully integrating American society. Randolph led the fight to integrate the war defense industry in 1940, forced President Truman to integrate the armed forces in 1948 and masterminded the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Justice. This march helped win passage of laws integrating public schools and public accommodations, ending discriminatory hiring and allowing

blacks to vote in the South. *This book is available through the DePaul University Labor Center (312-362-5823) and the Illinois Labor History Society (312-663-4107).*

The Fight in the Fields, Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers Movement

by Susan Ferris and Ricardo Sandoval

Ferris and Sandoval describe how Chavez organized the most difficult group of workers in America, migrant farm workers. They describe his 30-year fight to win increased salaries, better working conditions, health care benefits and pensions for the lowest paid workers in this country. *This book is available through the Illinois Labor History Society (312-663-4107).*

Mother Jones, the Most Dangerous Woman in America

by Elliott Gorn

The courageous story of the widowed woman who began organiz-

ing miners at the age of 50 and continued organizing them for the next 40 years. Mother Jones traveled throughout the United States preaching the gospel of unionism to working people. *This book is available through major book stores, the DePaul University Labor Center (312-362-5823) and the Illinois Labor History Society (312-663-4107).*

State of the Union, A Century of Labor

by Nelson Lichtenstein

A history of the last 100 years of the American labor movement. *This book is available through major book stores, the DePaul University Labor Center (312-362-5823) and the Illinois Labor History Society (312-663-4107).*

What are they talking about?

In Chicago, we know what a "soda" is, how to find the "el", who is "da mare" and the location of Hubbard's Cave.

Computer whizzes talk in terms like download, CRT, cookies, gigabyte and RAM. They have their own language.

Unions also speak a unique language. They talk about bargaining units, collective bargaining, recognition, negotiating, arbitration and grievances. These terms sometimes confuse new members, so the *Voice* staff decided to explain some terms that regularly appear in the paper.

Bargaining Unit: group of employees who form a union and become the exclusive, legally recognized representative of employees, and who then collectively negotiate with the employer.

Collective Bargaining: when the union and management negotiate the wages, benefits, hours and working conditions of employees in a bargaining unit.

Collective Bargaining Contract: a written agreement between the union and the employer, which sets the wages, benefits and working conditions for a bargaining unit. The contract mandates procedures for settling disputes.

Contract Ratification: when the bargaining unit members vote to approve a collective bargaining contract.

Grievance: an allegation by an employee or the union that management violated provisions of the collective bargaining contract.

Past Practice: a benefit that management gives to employees over a period of time, which is not a part of the collective bargaining contract. Management at one college provided free uniforms to the auto repair shop employees for ten years. Then, management decided to make the employees pay for the uniforms. The union filed a past practice grievance and won when it proved that the employees had received free uniforms every year for a long time.

Arbitration: a way to resolve a grievance or claim of past practice by selecting a neutral third party to issue a final and binding decision. People who make the decisions are called arbitrators.

Calendar of Union events

September 13

House of Representatives Meeting
4:00 pm, Moraine Valley College
10900 S. 88th Ave.
Palos Hills

October 11

Executive Board Meeting
4:00 pm, Union Office

October 26

Union Leadership Training
9:30 am, Holiday Inn Mart Plaza

November 1-2

IFT Community College Conference
Hyatt Oak Brook

Continued from page 1.

AFT Convention

Picard. Pickard represents over 14,000 graduate teaching assistants. In accepting the award Pickard said, "It is an honor to be receiving this award from Norm. It is because of his militancy and his going to jail, that people like me did not have to go."

The convention honored the Moraine Valley staff with the Saturn/UAW Partnership award for fostering cooperation between college management and staff. Chapter chair Rose Sakanis received the award for the chapter. The partnership award honors Sakanis and the support staff for their efforts in working with management on employee health and safety issues such as air quality, ergonomics and personal safety.

Delegates to the convention adopted two constitutional amendments. One amendment **reduces the dues for part-time faculty to \$12 per year from the previous rate of about \$30.** The second amendment **creates an AFT Solidarity Fund, which will provide state affiliates with an expanded special fund for legislative and political activities.** To activate the fund, delegates agreed to a modest dues increase.

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Address correction requested.

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