In a startling announcement before the August 22 Executive Board Meeting, President Norman Swenson announced he would not be a candidate in the March 2004 CCCTU election. Swenson cited personal health and family reasons for making his decision. He did promise, however, that he would serve as the chief negotiator for the 2004 City Colleges contracts and as the advisor to suburban contracts.

To protect the City Colleges contracts, Swenson appointed Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley to serve with him as assistant chief negotiator. He assured the membership that Buckley and other appointed team members would provide militancy and a healthy independence from administrative influence. He said, “I want to assure a seamless transition and continued first-rate contracts despite the hostile economic environment.”

When union leaders asked him if he would stay on as a consultant after his term expires in June 2004, Swenson said, “I will be happy to stay on as a consultant if I am satisfied with the quality of leadership elected in March.” Swenson indicated that as contract negotiations often last until the early hours of the morning, he did not want to dissipate his energy by also participating in a Local 1600 election. Swenson said, “I cannot succeed in contract negotiations if I’m fighting with both the administration and the political opposition.”

Swenson has served as president of Local 1600 since the American Federation of Teachers chartered Local 1600 in 1965. His leadership survived a baptism of fire as the Chicago City College Board forced him to lead the union out in seven strikes between 1966 and 1978. Swenson served two jail terms in 1971 and 1975 for leading two strikes because he violated two judges’ orders to return to work.

During his 38 years in office, Swenson has negotiated and/or supervised about 100 collective bargaining agreements from a position of strength. His most recent demonstration of strength within the labor movement occurred in October 2002 when he persuaded the members of over 20 AFL-CIO trade unions to walk off their construction jobs for two weeks to honor the picket line of the striking Harper College Faculty Chapter. This commitment from the trade unionists stopped construction of two major buildings at Harper and forced the Harper College Board to be more reasonable in negotiations.

In Springfield, Swenson’s most recent victory was regaining Local 1600’s collective bargaining rights in the City Colleges this year, thanks to the active assistance of Governor Rod Blagojevich and the Democratic majority in the House and Senate. Swenson said, “My successor will have to put in long hours to gain the trust of the labor movement in Chicagoland and the respect of elected officials.”
Local 1600 Part-time Professionals are in negotiations

Local 1600 representatives have attended three preliminary negotiation sessions with administration representatives from the City Colleges of Chicago on behalf of the CCC part-time professionals.

Local 1600 President Norm Swenson is the chief negotiator, along with negotiating team members Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley as assistant chief negotiator and Assistant to the President Janie Morrison. “We are presently having preliminary meetings with City Colleges dealing with ground rules for negotiations as well as discussing some non-economic issues. We intend to begin negotiations on economic issues only after all the non-economic issues are settled,” stated Swenson. The union intends to bring representatives from every campus to the negotiations table.

“We will work hard to obtain the best initial contract possible for the part-time professionals in the City Colleges,” asserted Janie Morrison.

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

President.................................................................Norman Swenson
Vice President, City Colleges Division..................Judith Armstead
Vice President, Suburban Faculty.........................Stu Sikora
Vice President, Suburban Staff...............................Gail Wiot
Secretary............................................................Verna Anderson
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Grievance Chairman..........................................Perry Buckley
Managing Editor...............................................Bob Blackwood
Editorial Chair..................................................Rochelle Robinson
Publicity Chair..................................................Jim O’Malley

CONTRACT EROSION

The current state budget crisis offers our administrators an excellent opportunity to try to gut our contracts. But only if we cooperate with them.

What can we do to resist administrative attempts to cave us in and erode our contracts?

• Don’t meet with administrators to discuss proposals to modify our contracts. Recently, a Local 1600 officer met with her administration to “discuss” eliminating department chairs and replacing them with non-union divisional deans. The administration immediately claimed the union had agreed to their proposal.

• Report all changes in working conditions, which have not been agreed to by the union, to the Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley. In the recent past, the Malcolm X College administration unilaterally imposed a $5 parking fee. No Local 1600 officer or chapter officer reported the new fee to Local 1600. When the City Colleges Chancellor heard about the fee, he attempted to raise it to $50 and impose it at every City College campus. At that point, I directed the Local 1600 grievance chair to file a grievance, and the new fee was cancelled at Malcolm X and the other City Colleges.

• Immediately resist efforts to “voluntarily” increase your workload in violation of your contract. Many years ago, well-intentioned nursing faculty in a few City Colleges’ nursing departments agreed to a “voluntary” increase in their teaching load. After the voluntary increase had become a three-year past practice, the administration imposed the increased load on all nursing departments. Local 1600 learned of the contract violation only at this time and immediately filed a grievance. But it was too late. A “past practice” had been established, and our union lost in arbitration.

What is the moral? Don’t volunteer to increase your workload. Report changes in working conditions to Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley. Don’t meet with administrators to “discuss” proposals to modify your contract. Don’t be an unwitting dupe to the erosion and destruction of your contract.
Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley has filed two “Step Two” grievances against the City Colleges for attacks against the colleges' nursing departments. “There seems to be an orchestrated attack against the nursing programs in general,” said Buckley, “and I cannot in the world understand why. The nurses are the backbone of our health programs.”

The City Colleges traditionally have used a “divide and conquer” approach to instituting changes in working conditions with the nurses. Local administrations would try to sneak through change by dealing with issues on a college-by-college basis. The Union is never informed of these changes; in some cases, the Union did not discover these changes until long after their implementation.

On August 22, Buckley met with the entire nursing faculty at Malcolm X College. After listening to their individual and collective grievances, he promised:

• to ask the Union lawyers for a written opinion on the legality of the “Two for One” credit for labs and clinicals, where the nurses receive only one hour credit for two hours worked;
• to continue to meet with the heads of the nursing departments to develop a unified, vigilant front;
• to arrange for a meeting with the City Colleges in an effort to resolve key issues.

Buckley asked the nurses to continue to meet with each other and to inform Local 1600 of all developments. Buckley also suggested the inclusion of specific contract language and protection in the upcoming CCC contract negotiations.

Since that meeting, however, the administration attack has continued. The Olive-Harvey department chair was removed in violation of the contract. At Daley College, the administration ordered the nurses to work extra hours due to uncovered classes, labs, and clinicals. System-wide abuses in scheduling and course selection exist. Further, at all the colleges, part-time faculty were informed, just two weeks before the start of the semester, that their hourly pay was to be cut in half. Many of them then quit. The colleges expected the full-time nurses to “pick up the slack” gratis.

At this point, Buckley is in contact with the nursing departments, O-H Grievance Chair Sonia Powell, Daley Grievance Chair Tom Kodogeorgiou, Truman Grievance Chair George Otto and K-K Grievance Chair Bill Settles. The nurses have asked K-K Nurse Ruby Reese, Truman Nurse Pat Corbett and O-H Nurse Amelia Stevens to liaison with Buckley.

On September 16 at the Chicago Sheraton Hotel, Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley (left) and President Norman Swenson (right) met with the Illinois Speaker of the House Michael Madigan to discuss politics in Illinois at Madigan’s fundraiser.
President Norman Swenson’s Career at a Glance

• 1965 — Swenson helps junior college teachers acquire the AFT Local 1600 charter and is elected president.
• 1966 — Swenson leads the City Colleges of Chicago teachers in the largest strike to ever hit a junior college system and the first by public employees in Chicago. After appeals, he serves 30 days in Cook County Jail in 1971 for leading the strike.
• 1967 — Swenson again leads the CCC teachers out. Mayor Richard J. Daley mediates the strike.
• 1969 — A two-day strike causes expedited arbitration to stop involuntary transfers of CCC faculty.
• 1971 — A five-week strike in the bitter cold of January and February ends when the CCC Board realizes it cannot break the union.
• 1973 — Local 1600 votes “no contract, no work” and strikes the CCC for two days.
• 1974 — Swenson leads the Moraine Valley faculty in a 17 day strike and settles under the auspices of a federal negotiator.
• 1975 — Swenson--jailed with a five month term for “contempt of court” for leading the 1975 CCC strike -- negotiates the contract while serving time in Cook County Jail. Governor Dan Walker grants Swenson a pardon and reduces his sentence to “time served.”
• 1977 — Thornton (now South Suburban) Faculty Chapter strikes for two weeks and earns 6.5% increase in salary.
• 1978 — After Swenson leads lobbying for three sessions in the General Assembly, the Illinois Tenure Act is passed.
• 1978 — When the CCC Board threatens to cancel the fall semester, Swenson leads Local 1600 out for three weeks. Mayor Michael Bilandic mediates the settlement.
• 1980 — Swenson's lobbying gains a 3% compounded annual increase on retirees' pensions.
• Since 1984, Swenson has been directing the organizing of six suburban classified chapters, three professional/technical chapters, the CCC Security Chapter and the Local 1600 Retirees Chapter.
• 1984 — After leading years of lobbying efforts, Swenson oversees the passage of the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Act ensuring a framework for collective bargaining in community colleges.
• 1984 — Thornton (now SS) Faculty Chapter strikes for three days in August; earns 14.8% salary increase.
• 1984 — Morton Faculty Chapter strikes for 29 days and wins contract; no faculty crosses the picket line.
• 1985 — Triton Faculty Chapter strikes for six days and wins average salary increases of 16% over two years.
• 1986 — Moraine Valley Support Chapter strikes for one day and wins a new contract.
• 1988 — Swenson wins election as a vice president of the American Federation of Teachers and currently represents community college members on the AFT Executive Council.
• 1988 — Swenson recommends establishment of Local 1600's scholarship program. Local chapters give up to $10 per member per year; the Swenson scholarship has given out over $40,000, much of it from Swenson.
• 1989 — AFT Higher Education Department establishes Norman G. Swenson Militancy Award to be presented at every AFT Convention to a higher education chapter to honor its assertive protection of members.
• 2002 — Swenson oversees the passage of pension enhancement legislation for prospective retirees.
• October 2002 — Swenson leads members from all of the chapters of Local 1600 in support of the striking Harper Faculty Chapter for two weeks. He notes that Harper is at least the 14th strike he has led and about the 100th contract he has negotiated for his members.
• August 22, 2003 — Swenson announces to Local 1600's Executive Board that for personal reasons he will not seek re-election in the March 2004 Local 1600 Election. He pledges to complete negotiations on all 2004 CCC contracts if he is satisfied with the quality of leadership elected in March 2004.

For news you can use, visit www.ccctu.com
President Norman Swenson of AFT Local 1600, IFT staffer Bob Breveng, the Harper Faculty Chapter and the Harper Professional/Technical Chapter have initiated an organizing campaign for the Harper College adjunct faculty. Both the Illinois Federation of Teachers (affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers and Local 1600) and the Illinois Education Association (affiliated with the National Education Association) are attempting to organize the part-time teachers.

The Harper College Faculty Chapter believes that their adjunct faculty would be far better off with Local 1600’s leadership. Faculty Chapter Chair Michael Harkins states, “Local 1600 can provide the benefits and salary these deserving faculty members truly merit. As far as the full-time faculty are concerned, Local 1600 has proven that it is the only choice.”

Local 1600 has already negotiated with the Harper College Board to provide benefits for 31 regular (budgeted) part-time employees working 19 hours a week but less than 37.5 hours or less than 52 weeks in the year in the Pro/Tech Chapter. These benefits include:

- right to participate in health care for part-time regular employees who work 3/4 of a full-time load,
- 14 paid holidays,
- earning 1.25 sick days per month,
- 2 personal days for part-time regular employees working 3/4 of a full-time load, and
- professional development funds for tuition or conferences.

Local 1600 recently increased the overload pay rate which is the basis of part-time faculty pay. Also, Local 1600 is affiliated with the AFL-CIO. Local 1600 helped the Harper Faculty Chapter conduct a successful strike in the fall of 2002 when over 20 different AFL-CIO trade unions refused to cross picket lines. The IEA has no affiliation with other Chicagoland unions.

Swenson says, “The Illinois Education Association (a rival union) has an unlimited budget and unlimited paid workers for this organizing campaign, but we have a record of accomplishment at Harper.”

IFT Staffer Bob Breveng is running this important organizing campaign with assistance from full-time faculty Michael Harkins, Pat Beach, Larry Knight, Paul Holdaway and David Richmond as well as Pro/Tech Chair Terry Engle and Mary Azawi.

At Triton College, the Triton Faculty Chapter has just initiated an organizing campaign to bring collective bargaining to the part-time teaching faculty, counselors, librarians, transfer specialists and advisors. Triton Faculty Chapter Chair Maggie Hahn Wade, Jim O’Malley and others are active in the campaign. Local 1600 has negotiated over 25 contracts at Triton College, covering 400 members in three bargaining units: the faculty, the classified and the mid-management.

At the July 18th House meeting, President Norman Swenson chaired the AFT’s Strategic Planning Organizing Subcommittee on July 14, 2003. The briefs for the CCC counselors regarding their arbitration will be filed in two weeks. A decision may be made in September. Grievance Chair Perry Buckley scheduled a meeting in the last week of August regarding the elimination of labs within the OH Nursing Department. Also, Buckley filed an emergency Step II Grievance on behalf of the security officers chapter at Daley.

Update on labor legislation passed by the 93rd General Assembly affecting Local 1600:
- SB 19 restores Local 1600’s collective bargaining rights with the CCC.
- HB 1457 extends bargaining rights to community college part-time faculty who teach three or more credit hours.
- HB 2805 adds faculty representation to the Board of Higher Education.
- HB 3396 mandates union recognition by majority card check.

Oakton Classified Chapter has settled on every issue in negotiations except funding of insurance costs and salary. South Suburban Faculty Chapter had 12 new faculty positions filled. Triton Faculty Chapter is talking to adjunct faculty and collecting cards for a representation vote and a future election. Moraine Valley’s adjunct faculty is talking with the MV administration to establish a meeting date to open negotiations for a contract. John Abraham, Deputy Director AFT Research & Information Services, was today’s guest speaker on 2003 national health care issues.

July House Meeting

President Norman Swenson makes a point about upcoming negotiations with the City Colleges on August 19 just before a luncheon meeting at the Wright College Chapter. Pictured to the left of Swenson is Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley; to the right of Swenson is Local 1600 Grievance Chair Maggie Hahn Wade, Jim O’Malley and others are active in the campaign. Local 1600 has negotiated over 25 contracts at Triton College, covering 400 members in three bargaining units: the faculty, the classified and the mid-management.
On Friday, August 15, most of the South Suburban Faculty Chapter met to discuss the opening of the semester; they were discussing their 11 newly hired faculty members.

At the luncheon of the Daley College Chapter on August 26, Chapter Chair Wendall Wilson welcomed President Norman Swenson and Chapter Chair Perry Buckley. Swenson endorsed Buckley’s effectiveness by appointing him to be his assistant during the upcoming negotiations. Swenson said, “These negotiations will be some of the most difficult we’ve encountered.”

Harper Faculty Chapter Chair Mike Harkins (center) greets Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley (left) and President Norman Swenson (right) at the August 20 meeting of the chapter. Swenson and Buckley discussed the effect of state cuts on financial aid to all community colleges.

Following the August 15 meeting, the leadership of the South Suburban Faculty Chapter met to discuss strategy: from left: Don Ehrhart, Mike Schnur, G. A. Griffith, Diane Black, Karen Simac, John Geraci, Dave Anderson, and Chapter Chair Bill Naegele.

Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley, President Norman Swenson, Grievance Chair Sonia Powell, Olive-Harvey Chapter Chair John Harris and Zada Johnson discussed grievances at Olive-Harvey and upcoming City Colleges negotiations during the August 19 luncheon.
Oakton Classified Chapter Ratifies Three-year Contract

After a long contentious negotiation's process which extended two and one-half months past the expiration date of the old contract, the Oakton Classified Association's negotiating team finally brought back a “no give back,” three-year contract to its members. On Tuesday, September 16, 2003, the members of the unit ratified the proposal by a vote of 195 “yes” and 42 “no.”

The three-year contract features a 4.1% increase the first year, a minimum 4.6% increase the second year and a salary re-opener for the third and final year. In addition to the fine salary increase, the team was also able to increase the stipend for the retirees. Bob Breving stated, “Instead of a flat dollar amount for the last year of service, the incentive will increase based on years of service.” Workers with a $30,000 salary and 15 years of service will have $3,200 added to their last year's salary, while workers with a $40,000 salary and the same 15 years of service will have $4,500 added to their salary. In addition, the board will pay the retiree's premium for the State of Illinois College Insurance Plan for five consecutive years after retirement. The cost to the retiree is $92 per year.

Oakton Chapter Chair Alice Barnhart believes: “I thought the big issues were no givebacks, especially in the health insurance plan where the board was seeking concessions and a huge increase in employee contributions.”

The OCCCSA Negotiations Team consisted of: Alice Barnhart, Marilyn Davis, Sue Moser, Tony Schimel and Jill Verstrate. IFT Staffer Bob Breving and Local 1600 Assistant to the President Janie Morrison acted as advisors to the negotiating team.

Retirees’ Chapter Chair Pat Dyra on Federal Lobbying for Senior Citizens

If you are retired, or plan on retiring in the near future, you might consider these tips on lobbying your legislators. Contact the Alliance for Retired Americans (ARA) at www.unionvoice.org to get feedback on federal government bills that will impact your retirement. Also, take advantage of its website to send an email to your congressman and/or senator on legislation they are considering.

Another organization you should consider joining is the American Association of Retired People (AARP), a very large and well-respected lobbying group. Its bulletin is useful; its magazine, “Modern Maturity,” is not only fun but also is America’s most widely circulated magazine.

For example, the AARP’s September Bulletin noted that an obscure provision of the Medicare bill passed by the Senate in June might become law this fall. It would exempt retiree health plans from federal age discrimination laws. Should this bill pass as is, employers could reduce or eliminate benefits for retirees who are 65 or older, bypassing the 1967 Age Discrimination in Employment Act. Contact the AARP at www.aarp.org.

Retirees’ Events for Fun and Profit

The Retiree Chapter will attend Lerner and Lowe’s musical comedy “Camelot,” on Wed., Oct. 22, at Drury Lane Theater. Lunch is at noon. The cost is $23 for members; $33 for non-members. Send checks made out to “CCCTU” to the Cook County College Teachers Union, 208 W. Kinzie St., Chicago IL 60610. Reservations will not be accepted after October 10. Contact Janie Morrison at 312-755-9400 for more information.

On Wednesday, Nov. 12, the Retiree Chapter is holding a luncheon with a speaker from the Social Security Administration at noon at Niko’s Restaurant, 7600 S. Harlem Avenue, Bridgeview, Il. Cash bar is at 11 a.m., lunch at noon. The speaker begins at 1 p.m. Members will pay $10, non-members $15. Mail checks to the CCCTU office. Contact Janie Morrison for more information.

Retirees Events for Fun and Profit

Photo from Retirees’ August 21 Chicago architecture tour.
The Daily Herald delivered kudos to Margie Sedano of the Harper Pro-Tech Chapter, the driving force behind the First Annual Diversity Walk on September 21, for promoting positive awareness of the northwest suburban area’s diverse communities.

Associate Professor Rita Johnson Lowe is celebrating her 33rd year of marriage to Tommie Lowe and her 30th year of employment at Harold Washington College. She sends greetings and thanks to all her friends and fellow union members.

Associate Professor Pat Beach of the Harper College Hospitality Management Department acted as an evaluator to U.S. Navy Food Services with the International Food Service Executives Association on food preparation for the fleet in the current Iraq conflict.

London’s Tate Gallery just delivered Robert Coale’s painting “Death of Love” (1888) by Lady Stanley to the Olive-Harvey retiree. It was featured in the Tate Gallery’s exhibition of The Victorian Nude at London, Munich, the Brooklyn Museum of Art and Japan.

Herman Stark, Ph.D. of the South Suburban Faculty Chapter had his philosophical treatise, A Fierce Little Tragedy, published by Rodopi Publishing Co. It will be on the shelves in three months.

Facilities Utilization Specialist Terri Quam of the Oakton Classified Chapter has earned a certificate in Meeting Planning and Convention Management with a 4.0 average. She was also certified by the state in Hotel and Food Service Law.

Editorial Note: “Personal Glimpses” is the place for publishing good news about life-significant wedding anniversaries, commendations from your employer or college chapter, awards won, etc. Send your typed “personal glimpse” with a photo of your face (a suggestion, not a necessity), address, chapter and your college and home phone numbers to:

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