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The Official Electronic Newsletter of SEIU Local 517M

December 2018 Edition

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Lansing Toys for Tots Collection is Almost Here!



On Wednesday, December 5th and Thursday, December 6th you will have the opportunity to make a child's Christmas a little brighter.

SEIU is hosting two Toys for Tots donation sites in the Van Wagoner Building and Constitution Hall. Anyone is welcome to donate a new, unwrapped toy and in return SEIU will provide lunch! Please take the time and effort to donate to needy children in our community.

Toys for Tots stated goal is "to deliver, through a new toy at Christmas, a message of hope to less fortunate youngsters that will assist them in becoming responsible, productive, patriotic citizens." Let's do what we can to help them attain this goal.

Donations will be accepted at the following locations:

December 5th – 11:00 am to 2:00 pm in the Van Wagoner Building Lobby

December 6th – 11:00 am to 2:00 pm in the Atrium of Constitution Hall

Old Newsboys Annual Fundraiser Set for December 6th



The Old Newsboys' "Lansing Spoof Journal" will be out on Thursday, December 6th in Lansing. Volunteers will be selling the paper to raise money for needy children in the Lansing area.

The Old Newsboys Association works with local schools and service programs within a 25-mile radius of Lansing to provide shoes and boots for needy children. Last year they helped almost 7,000 children in communities such as Grand Ledge, Perry, Dimondale, St. Johns, Lansing, and many others.

If you are interested in volunteering to help sell newspapers for this great cause, please email Cassandra Trawitz at: 81.ctravit@nhaschools.com. Volunteers do not have to schedule the entire day off, they can work a few hours, a half day, or an entire day. This is a great way to use any School and Community Participation Leave hours you may still have.

Otherwise, be on the lookout for the sellers on December 6th and give generously,

State Employee Contracts Ratified - Headed for Civil Service Commission Approval

The contract ratification ballots were opened, tallied and counted by the SEIU Local 517M Election Tally Committee on Monday, November 19, 2018. The final results showed overwhelming support for the new three-year agreements. 39% of the state employee voting membership returned ballots. Approval percentages for each bargaining unit are:

Human Services Support Unit - 90.7%
Scientific & Engineering Unit - 94%
Technical Unit - 88%

The provisions of the new contract begin January 1, 2019. There is a wage and healthcare benefit reopener for the last two years of the contract. Negotiations for wages and healthcare for the remaining two years will commence in 2019.

SEIU Local 517M Executive Director Liza Estlund Olson stated "Over 30 informational sessions were held across the state including the U.P. giving members the opportunity to have their questions answered. By this vote, our members overwhelmingly recognize the value and importance of having a collective bargaining agreement that gives them a say in their wages, benefits and working conditions. Their overwhelming support shows the Civil Service Commission that state employees are mindful of their responsibilities as union members, and voted their support in recognition of what was achieved by their Union."

South Haven Food Service Members Raise Funds for Weekend Meals

On November 2nd the South Haven Schools Food Service Chapter hosted its 2nd annual bowling fundraiser. This fund raiser was held at the Lakeside Entertainment Center in South Haven. The fundraiser was on behalf of the "Blessings in a Backpack" Program, which provides weekend meals for students in the South Haven School District.

This year's event was very well attended, almost doubling the number of participants from last year. South Haven Schools Food Service Chapter President Tracy Burrows said "last year we had 32 bowlers this year we have 58 which really shows how much the people in our community care about the kids, a lot of kids would go without food on the weekends if we did not have this program."

The total amount raised for this year's event was \$1,012. Last year's total raised was \$610. There were several awards given out for Men's and Women's high score, and best bowler. Prizes were also given out for the 2

individuals that had the most fun and Food Service Worker Tynisha Jackson won the most prestigious award: The Worst Bowler Award. A fine time was had by all, we are already looking forward to next year's event. We want this event to continue to grow because it supports a needed and necessary cause.

Photo Contest Winners

We have the winners from those members who submitted pictures of what they do for the citizens of the State of Michigan!

Human Services Support Unit:



Greg Morsaw is an Indian Outreach Worker and educates the community regarding Native Culture and teachings.



Mark Williams submitted this photo showing the work of the Problem Resolution Office for the Unemployment Insurance Agency of Michigan. In photo are Geraldine Yarbrough (standing) and Pam Martin (seated).

School and Local Government Regions:



Cari Fry and Laura Koepplin work for the Westland Library and were performing an "American Idol" themed summer reading skit at a local elementary school to get kids excited about the summer reading program.



*Michelle O'Deay is a Property and Evidence Specialist for the Saginaw Police Department.
(Yep that's a lot of marijuana)*



Renita Overton is a Library Clerk at the Zauel Public Library of Saginaw.

Scientific and Engineering Unit:



Jennifer Johnson is a Fisheries Biologist and for part of her job she captures and examines Lake Sturgeon in a "fish elevator" in the Menominee Dam to assure they meet certain biological criteria and can be moved up two dams in order to have more rearing habitat available for their offspring.



Grace Bommarito is a Forensic Scientist in the Biology/DNA Unit Forensic Science Division of the Michigan State Police.

Technical Unit:



Tammy Cruickshank is a Dental Hygienist at the Kinross Correctional Facility.



Ronald Kulwicki is a Lab Technician and in this photo is band sawing large fish samples from Michigan waterways to prepare them for extraction and determine if they are contaminated with mercury or pesticides.

Thank you to those who took the time to share what you do! We are still accepting pictures of what SEIU members do for their jobs for a video highlighting SEIU members.

You Talk About What...?



Kristine Rendon speaks to the Delta/Waverly Rotary Club

Poop! Kristine Rendon of the Department of Environmental Quality talks about the proper maintenance of septic systems to members of the local communities that she is assigned. She and 3 other colleagues travel throughout their assigned territories in the State to talk to schools, churches, Rotary and other community groups about the importance of maintaining septic systems to prevent failure and possible groundwater contamination. The program is called SepticSmart and is done in cooperation with the Federal Environmental Protection Agency. This is just one example of the diverse duties that our members perform to protect the public health of Michigan citizens.

School and Local Government Region 1 Representative Changes



School and Local Government Division labor representative Darliane Blackmon has left SEIU Local 517M after 11 years of service to the Local. She accepted a position with the Saginaw Public School District and will become a bargaining unit member again. Darliane was active with SEIU Local 466M while working for Buena Vista Township before joining the staff of Local 517M after a merger of the two locals. We wish Darliane the best of luck with her new job and look forward to working with her as a member.



Taking Darliane's place we are welcoming back Clint Bryant. Clint returns to us from the staff of State Representative Vanessa Guerra. Clint also worked this past election cycle for us and we welcome his return. He will take over Darliane's contracts and will work out of the Saginaw office.

2019 SEIU Local 517M Calendars Are Here!

Click on the link to download the state employee or school and local government 2019 calendars.

State Employee Calendar: www.seiu517m.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/40/files/2018/11/2019calendarstate.pdf

School and Local Government Calendar: www.seiu517m.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/40/files/2018/11/2019calendarslg.pdf

Calendar of Upcoming Union Events for December, 2018

December 2-3: State Employee Steward Training, Lansing

December 4: Scientific and Engineering Unit Board Meeting, Lansing

December 5: Toys for Tots Donations at Van Wagoner Building, Lansing

December 6: Toys for Tots Donations at Constitution Hall, Lansing

December 13: Technical Unit Board Meeting, Lansing

For more information on the above events, consult our on-line calendar at:

<http://www.seiu517m.org/events/month/>

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