



Your Voice Your Choice

OPEIU Local 39 Newsletter

In This Issue

The first Quarterly Membership meeting of the new year is this Wednesday. This is your meeting, a place where you can ask questions, get answers, get your voice heard, and hear how the Union is spending your dues money.

Membership Meeting Notice
State of the Unions

Unions have changed a lot over the years. Long before the industrial age there were guilds representing those who worked in a particular trade, guiding novices and setting workplace rules. Over the years, those morphed and changed into the unions we have today, but they aren't done changing. What's next for unions in the 21st century?

Quick Links

Hey Hey NCAA!

The Taxpayer Cost of Walmart's Low Wages

Labor Board revives efforts to speed up elections

Take a look.

PS - Membership Meeting Notice

P.S. - OPEIU Local 39 Membership Meeting
THIS WEDNESDAY
February 19, 2014 5:30 P.M.

All union members invited and encouraged to attend.

437 S. Yellowstone Drive
Vantage II Building
2nd Floor Conference Room

Agenda

- Unit Updates
- Financial Update
- Your Questions



The Membership Meetings survey is still open for people to take. We want to hear from more voices so that the meetings, YOUR meetings, can be more useful and effective.

Please take the following survey to help us understand what would make it more likely that you would come to a Membership meeting. It will only take a few minutes and the information you give us will be really important in helping us craft membership meetings that serve the needs of the membership.

[Local 39 Membership Meeting Survey](#)

State of the Unions

Have you ever had this conversation?

"Oh, sure. There are still unions. I'm in one."

"Really? Why? Unions may have been needed at one time, but things are better now."

Is the need for unions done? Did the gains made in the 20th century that resulted in fair pay, good working conditions, worker safety, vacation and sick days cover **everyone**? Is the 40 hour workweek something delivered from on high as the perfect balance between work and leisure? *(Does the 40 hour workweek even still exist?)*



via Photopin

Even if the answer to all of the questions above was a resounding **Yes** (hint: it's not) that worker's paradise has seen its share of snakes in recent years. We've seen Act 10 take away most bargaining rights for State employees and there have been rumors made (and, to be fair, denied) that [up next for the Wisconsin anti-union agenda is Right to Work legislation](#), such as they got next door in Michigan. Many with 40 hour work weeks find themselves working more than 40 hours: working from home, on vacation days and sick days, over weekends and late at night, and even [weekends off are under attack](#). And that's just for us who work in professional fields.

Most of us know that unions and the gains made by unions are under attack across the country. But there are signs that the pressure against unions from government and worker apathy are beginning to lessen. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has [issued instructions that should speed up the time](#) between when worker's begin seeking union representation and when those elections can occur. This will limit the time that unscrupulous employers have to threaten workers who are considering union representation. (Question: if unions are "no longer needed," then why do companies spend millions to keep workers from gaining representation? [Why is the power of the state](#) sometimes wielded [against employees who want to unionize?](#))

Groups not normally represented by unions have begun seeking redress. Those working in [food service have begun striking](#) to demand living wages and union representation while many working at [Walmart have been organizing to demand living wages](#) without a "union." Even more unusual, football players at [Northwestern University have filed papers with the NLRB](#) seeking representation.

The efforts of fast food and retail workers may not result in representation, and student athletes may never be seen as workers. But in an era of eroding worker's unions and worker's rights, it is encouraging to see that more people are realizing that "things" are not better now, not for everyone. The time for Unions with new types of union representation, may be just what's needed to solve the economic crisis we've been in for too long. More people with more money means more things being purchased which drives the economy. The renewed fight for representation and living wages may be the fight to watch.

We hope to see you at the Quarterly Membership meeting THIS WEDNESDAY, February 19th. Bring your questions. If you can't make it (or even if you can) please be sure to take our quick survey so that our union can better serve the membership.

In Solidarity,

OPEIU Local 39

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