

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES IN PUBLIC SERVICE

Riverside County

Justice for Larry Taylor

Larry Taylor is back to work—**with full back pay**—after having been terminated for alleged dishonesty.

He was terminated after having been accused of dishonesty by one of the minors in the Day Treatment Center he was responsible for in his capacity as a Probation Assistant.



Kathie Delgado and Larry Taylor

Local 777 Representative Kathie Delgado filed a grievance and saw the case through to arbitration, with assistance from Representative Sala Ponnech, and did a great job representing Larry!

In the hearing before the arbitrator the County could only provide indirect or hearsay evidence and was unable to produce any witnesses that could testify directly on the issue.

The arbitrator ruled that the County did not provide sufficient evidence to show just cause for discharging Larry and ordered **reinstatement and full back pay**.

Californians to Protect Local Taxpayers and Public Safety

Stop the Raid on Local Government!

Local 777 and many other public employee unions, along with the California State Association of Counties, and the California League of Cities, are gathering signatures to place an initiative on this November's ballot to stop the Governor's attempt to balance the state budget on the backs of local government.

The **LOCAL TAXPAYERS AND PUBLIC SAFETY PROTECTION ACT** proposes to cap the amount of local revenues the state can take without taxpayer approval.

The Governor's proposed budget includes a \$1.3 billion property tax shift from local government (including cities and counties) reducing funding for juvenile probation, the elimination of booking fee reimbursements, and a reduction in transportation funding relating to the suspension of the Proposition 42 transfer.

Megan Taylor, as spokeswoman for the League of California Cities, observed recently that the state is projected to take \$5.2 billion from local revenue this year, and the governor's proposal may hike that to \$6.5 billion.

The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) has been providing nonpartisan fiscal and policy advice to the legislature for more than 55 years.

In the recent analysis of the Governor's Budget proposal Legislative Analyst Elizabeth Hill wrote "Similar to the 1990's the budget proposes to shift \$1.3 billion of property taxes from local governments to K-14 districts—and reduce state education spending by an equal amount. This proposal raises questions concerning the Legislature's role regarding the property tax. In our



Local 777 Representative Sala Ponnech collecting initiative signatures.

view the Legislature should use its authority over this tax for the overall betterment of local government, not as a state rainy day fund. Accordingly we recommend the Legislature reject this proposal."

We will be letting you know as information becomes available. In the meantime, check out: <http://www.protectlocalservices.com/>

New Fire Association Formed!



Riverside County Fire Department members recently formed an association in order to strengthen communication and better address their unique needs. They also elected their first CRFEA executive board members: Walter Brandes, President; Phil Albanese, Vice-President; and Mark Miller, Secretary.



At their February meeting, CRFEA members discussed with Supervisor Bob Buster (standing in center of above photo with CRFEA members) the many challenges County fire employees face. Members in attendance were impressed with the opportunity to speak openly with Supervisor Buster and felt very positive about the communication that has been established.

Special thanks should go to the several CRFEA members who volunteered to phone bank on Supervisor Buster's successful re-election campaign!

Court Employees Ratify Contract!

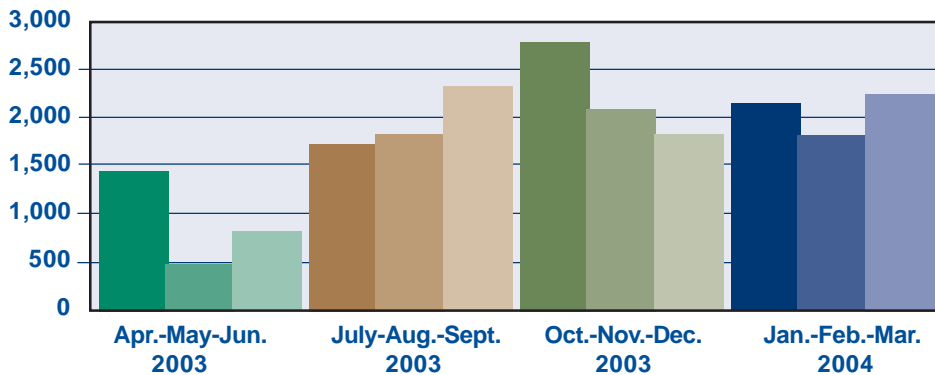
On March 25th Superior Court members voted overwhelmingly to ratify a new MOU for six hundred members.

The two year agreement provides significant increases in health benefits, gives an additional forty hours of personal leave, which can be used just like vacation, and offers paid release time to attend union sponsored trainings.

Negotiating team member Irene Cordova observed, "We've never had to negotiate during such difficult economic times, yet we were able to get a deal that makes sense for our members. We were able to protect ourselves from the double digit inflation in health care costs. That is something of which I am proud."

We want to congratulate Irene and the rest of the team on a job well done, with negotiations handled very well by Riverside staff supervisor Stephen Switzer.

Join Your Coworkers Who Have Visited Our Website in the Past Year



Justice for Willie Brooks!

Willie Brooks has just been ordered back to work with two years full back pay, benefits and seniority, after the Union won his grievance arbitration!

Willie, a Building Maintenance Mechanic assigned to the Robert Presley Detention Center, was employed by the County for more than 10 years at the time of his termination.

Willie was terminated after being accused of dishonesty because of several record keeping mistakes. Willie was terminated for following practices

that had been in existence for the last ten years.

Local 777 Representative Kathie Delgado with assistance from Representative Sala Ponnech represented



A happy Willie Brooks

Willie in the arbitration. The arbitrator stated that Willie was no more guilty of sloppy record keeping than the rest of the Department.

Arbitrator Doug Collins also stated in his award, "the incidents cited by the Department (Facilities Maintenance) were largely a result of its own vague, convoluted procedures and failure of its supervisors to properly oversee implementation by subordinate employees."

Congratulations Ron!



Congratulations to Riverside County member Ron Hull (left in photo) who was recently honored by the Riverside County Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission for his good works at Riverside Juvenile Hall.

Four More Years?

The Numbers Speak for Themselves

2.9 million private-sector jobs lost

January 2001-January 2004
Bureau of Labor Statistics

2.8 million manufacturing jobs lost

January 2001-January 2004
Bureau of Labor Statistics

3 million more people in poverty

2000-2002, U.S. Census Bureau

14.7 million workers unemployed, underemployed or given up

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Nearly
75 million Americans without Health insurance at some point

2001-2002, Families USA

26 percent couldn't pay for family health care needs

2002, The Pew Research Center

8 million workers could lose overtime pay under Bush's proposed Fair Labor Standards Act changes

Economic Policy Institute

Labor-Management Approach At Animal Control

Riverside County Animal Control has recently received a lot of bad publicity over staffing patterns and documentation problems. At the Union's request, the County agreed to form a Labor-Management committee.

As we go to press, a first meeting with a State Mediator is being scheduled to assist with the formation of ground rules and structure.

Local 777 Representative Linda Jefferson reports "I am very happy to see that the County is willing to commit the resources to this important effort during these difficult budget times."

Bossed to Death

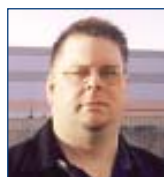
A job that provides little opportunity for choice may shorten your life. That's the main finding of a 25-year study of nearly 3,000 workers funded by the National Institute on Aging and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

The researchers estimated the influence of five job characteristics – emotional demands, physical demands, security, social support, and **decision latitude**, meaning control over the circumstances of work, or freedom to choose what to do and how to do it.

People whose work was mostly routine and passive were 43% more likely to die over a five- year period and 50% more likely to die over a 10-year period.

Stock Clerk Reclassification Victory!

From the time members Dean Norton, Brandon Fernandez, Kim Mickens and



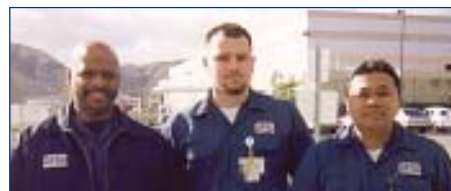
Dean Norton

Christopher Gotoc came to work as Stock Clerks for DPSS Logistics, their jobs combined traditional stock clerk duties (receiving, storing, inventory) with tasks

normally associated with skilled trades (furniture installation, facilities repair).

The four clerks—and their supervisors—were aware that employees in Community Health Agency's "Support Services Technician" series did the same work but for significantly more pay.

After their supervisors had requested the department reclassify them and were turned down, the members then went to Local 777 representative Sala Ponnoch and together a grievance was filed.



Kim Mickens, Brandon Fernandez, Christopher Gotoc

At the step one hearing, the hearing officer granted the Stock Clerks the remedy provided by the MOU: an expedited reclassification study by Human Resources to determine if reclassification was warranted.

As a result of the study, DPSS reclassified all four Stock Clerks effective 12/25/03!

...stronger together

- Member Services
- Discount Tickets
- Meeting Info
- Past Newsletters
- MOUs
- Voter Registration

Look what there is for YOU...

On the web at www.liuna777.org



Outstanding Attendance For Local 777 Annual Leadership Training!

On February 6th and 7th Local 777 held their Annual Leadership Training in Palm Springs. Over sixty Stewards and elected Chapter leaders attended, coming from Riverside County, the cities of Los Angeles, Downey, La Quinta and Newport Beach, and Superior Court of California—Riverside County.

The training included topics on Stress and Ergonomics, presented by Scott P. Schneider, LHSFNA Director of Occupational Health and Safety, and Jamie Becker, LHSFNA Behavioral Healthcare Coordinator.

Additional topics included Workers' Compensation Reform, Labor Law issues, the March 2nd Elections and the new CalPERS credit option.

The first evening a Dinner for the attendees saw special guests Mary Ann Andreas, candidate from the 80th Assembly District and potentially the first Native American woman to be elected to the State Legislature, along with Los Angeles City Councilmember Martin Ludlow.

Councilmember Ludlow presented Kurt Reschke with a commendation from the City Council on his outstanding work as an employee since 1975 and union leader for many of those years.

The conference ended with PBS video "Not in Our Town" produced ten years ago about how a small community in Montana organized against hate groups and the racist hate crimes they were committing.

That effort was led by LIUNA Montana Organizer Randy Siemers, who reflected movingly on the recent commemoration locally on ten years having passed and what had changed and what had not. He concluded "Ten years later, for me the struggle—our struggle—continues. We must continue to fight for all of those in our community who would be targeted for discrimination."

"Many thanks to LIUNA Vice-President and Regional Manager Rocco Davis who took time out from his hectic schedule to attend," reports Local 777 Business Manager Fred W. Lowe, "and let our leadership know how much LIUNA supports its public employee members."



Over 60 Local 777 Stewards attended the Annual Leadership Training in Palm Springs.



(From left) Jennifer Felix, Michael Grace, and Cynthia Hawthorne from Riverside County.



Rocco Davis, LIUNA Vice President and Regional Manager (on right), presents Local 777 Business Manager Fred Lowe with a \$20,000 Organizing Grant!



Jamie Becker, Behavioral Healthcare Coordinator from LIUNA's Health and Safety Fund, presents a workshop on Stress Management.



Los Angeles leaders (from left) Dave Bunjac and Kurt Reschke, and Mike Wojciellowski from Newport Beach.



Members enjoy dinner program which included speakers Martin Ludlow, Los Angeles City Councilman, and Mary Ann Andreas, candidate for the 80th Assembly District.

City of Los Angeles

30-Day Suspension Rescinded!

Remember the big “news” story about a Councilmember’s Chief of Staff and a member of the City Council filming in the



Sergeant Susan Obeso Kapoh

Mayor’s Ceremonial Office (not the Mayor’s private office) without permission for a Diabetes fundraiser?

Politics being what it is, somebody had to pay the price for this “horrible breach of security” and that was going to be one of our members in General Services Security, Sergeant Susan Obeso Kapoh, who was issued an Intent To Suspend for thirty days by the Department.

Evidently putting her life on the line on a daily basis to protect the public and City employees was not nearly as important, and the day this took place she had been working on a homicide....

The Department charged Sgt. Kapoh with violating a longstanding and important City Policy. When asked in what section of the Operations Manual we could find the “policy,” the Department admitted it did not have an Operations Manual or anything resembling it. By the way, Susan has often requested that one be developed.

At the informal Skelly Hearing, Representative Victor Gordo, on behalf of Sgt. Kapoh, brought out the fact that she acted as any reasonable person in her position would have: she verified the identity of all of the parties; she ensured nobody was granted access to any private office; and she ordered her subordinate officer to remain with the Councilman and the others at all times.

The impartial hearing officer who heard the case returned a not guilty

verdict within a few days. He ruled that Susan should not have any discipline imposed on her, and that the Department “tighten its policies and procedures.”

City of Pasadena-Lawsuit Update

Victory In The California Supreme Court!

The California Supreme Court recently clarified existing law by ruling that public agencies cannot avoid paying CalPERS contributions on employees by employing them as Temps or by using Temporary employment agencies when the employee functions under the direction and control of the public agency.

This decision is a result of a class action suit brought by employees in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Water District, where the employer for years had been using temporary agency employees who worked for years and who were supervised by MWD employees.

This is, in part, is what the City of Pasadena has been doing—along with working employees for the City as City Service Workers and Temps.

Under State law, it is very clear that the employer must pay into CalPERS once an employee has worked at least six months, or 1,800 hours.

This means that employees working longer than this period must become enrolled in CalPERS, with an obligation on the part of the employer to pay into CalPERS.

“This significant decision will hopefully bring resolution to the lawsuit we have with the City of Pasadena,” reports Business Manager Fred Lowe.

Stay tuned...

City of Los Angeles

LAX Members Prevent Uniform Allowance Flight!

Management at LAX has been in the news recently over problems with its various contracts—and it turns out inter-

preting our MOU is no exception.

Recently, one of the Custodian Supervisors at LAX contacted the Union after learning that they were not receiving the \$20-\$30 per pay period, for their uniform allowance that they are entitled to receive under Article 43 of the MOU.

After Management refused to budge, Local 777 Representative Victor Gordo then took the case to the CAO’s office, which realized that the Union was correct in its interpretation.

All 777 Custodian Supervisors will now be receiving a check for back pay for approximately \$600.00 for their uniform allowance!

**Privatization
UPDATE!**

When President Bush announced he would move to privatize 850,00 public employee jobs in the Federal sector, no one wanted to believe what they were hearing. Now we’re seeing “outsourcing” and “off shoring” and we may be facing a potential 14 million U.S. service jobs being shipped overseas in the near future.

These are the findings from a recent study done by the management consulting firm McKinsey & Company. Their estimates are based on a recent study done by the University of California, Berkeley, which compared, for example, the average wage gap between the United States and India—the top outsourcing destination in the developing world. That study found the wage gap to be more than 12:1 for telephone operators and 9:1 for medical transcribers.

Maybe we should thank these U.S. companies for their “patriotism” by not patronizing them!

Many of our tax returns are currently being done in India, which means our private and personal financial information has been shipped overseas thanks to the President’s privatization ideology.

Whose job will be next?



The Lowe-Down

by Fred Lowe

Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

Governor Schwarzenegger has stressed his intent to undertake a broad-based comprehensive review and restructuring in State operation that will improve efficiency and produce fiscal benefits.

I have a suggestion for the Governor on where to begin this process.

The Personal Income Tax (PIT) and the Corporate Tax (CT) are two of the State's most important General Fund revenues.

With estimated revenues in 2004-05 of approximately \$38 billion and \$7.5 billion, respectively, revenues from these two tax programs are expected to constitute 2/3 of General Fund revenue in 2004-05.

The Multi-State Tax Commission (MTC) — a multi-State tax compact (of which California is a member) recently produced a study that indicated that the State has lost between \$2.4 billion and \$4 billion over the last four years due to abusive tax sheltering schemes for wealthy individuals and corporations.

We hope the Governor will make this issue a top priority.

Free Notary and Copy Service Offered in Riverside

The LIUNA Local 777 Riverside office offers free notary public service as well as providing up to 20 free copies — by appointment only.

Please call our Riverside office, (909) 682-4590, for further information or to schedule an appointment during office hours.

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IMPORTANT UNION NEWS INSIDE!

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MEMBERSHIP MEETING!

DATE: TUESDAY, MAY 25, 2004

TIME: 6:00 P.M.

**PLACE: MAX WARREN CENTER
4000 TENTH STREET
RIVERSIDE**

**PURPOSE: QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING
FOR ALL LOCAL 777 MEMBERS**

FOOD AND DRINK PROVIDED!

Singing For Peace

Country legend Willie Nelson has a new song he has written called, "Whatever Happened to Peace on Earth."

The song's lyrics include:

How much oil is one human life worth?... We believe everything that they tell us

They're gonna kill us so we gotta kill them first...

How much is that soldier's life worth

And whatever happened to peace on Earth?

Good Question...