



Women's News

The Teamster Women's Newsletter

James P. Hoffa, General President • C. Thomas Keegel, General Secretary-Treasurer • Sue Mauren, Women's Conference Director

O CANADA!

Canadian Teamsters Hit the Ground Running

Teamster women in Canada had a busy and productive 2010, and there's no stopping them in 2011.

This year, Teamsters Canada and the Canadian women's caucuses will again raise money and participate in the CIBC Run for the Cure. In October, the Teamsters Quebec Women's Caucus raised \$14,000 and the Teamsters Ontario Women's Caucus raised \$8,500 to support breast cancer research, education and awareness. Teamster local union officers, staff and members also took part in the race, which raised \$33 million nationwide to support the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

While the Run for the Cure is one of their annual activities, the Teamsters Quebec Women's Caucus takes part in a number of important projects throughout the year.

"We are still raising money for the shelter in Montreal for women and their children who are victims of domestic violence," said Brigitte Sottile, Director of Education for Teamsters Canada and President of the Teamsters Quebec Women's Caucus. "Each year the money we raise goes to a different project at the shelter, like help for the kids, more therapists or companions to go with the women to court when they testify against their ex-husbands."

Each year the Teamsters Quebec Women's Caucus raises about \$10,000 for the shelter and they plan to

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Continental Airlines Workers Stand United

At a rally held recently in Houston, Rose Sheppard stood beside Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa and reflected on how far she and her co-workers at Continental Airlines (CAL) had come. The fleet service workers had tried five times over the past decade to form a union, but each attempt was unsuccessful; that is, until the 7,500 workers joined the Teamsters. These workers ratified their first Teamster contract in late December 2010.

"The union is important to me because it's job security and the union makes sure you get respected and treated equally and fairly," Sheppard said.

Sheppard, a member of Local 19 in Houston, was at the rally to motivate her co-workers as they continue to campaign. United Airlines and Continental Airlines have merged into one company called United. There needs to be another representation election for the 7,500 Continental fleet service workers repre-

sented by the Teamsters and about 6,800 ramp workers at United, who are currently represented by the International Association of Machinists. The choice is between representation by the Teamsters, Machinists or no union.

"I've never seen anything like the contract we got with the Teamsters and I've been a union member and in negotiations before," Sheppard said. "In a short amount of time we accomplished a lot."

Improvements and gains in the contract include protections against unjust discipline, termination, outsourcing and furloughs, and provides for 10.5 percent pay increases over the life of the 30-month contract.

Keeping Connected

Carolyn Parker Breen is a fleet service member at Baltimore/Washington International (BWI) airport. Breen is an active member of the CAL Fleet Teamsters Facebook group and encour-

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A Message from Women's Conference Director Sue Mauren

Your Participation is Critical All Year Long

Last month, we celebrated Women's History Month and International Women's Day on March 8. This year also marked the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, and sadly, the 100th anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire tragedy that took the lives of 146 workers, mostly women.



As we look back to our past, we realize how far we've come, as well as how important it is to fight to maintain our middle class given the recent attacks on workers' rights by politicians in Wisconsin, Ohio and states across the country.

We can do our part as Teamsters, and as Teamster women, throughout the year to continue the legacy of the strong, spirited women that came before us. Here are some ideas for what you can do:

- Attend meetings and events in your local union;
- Form a women's committee;
- Find out about leadership opportunities, like becoming a shop steward;
- Mentor your co-workers;
- Volunteer in your community;
- Register to attend the 2011 Teamsters Women's Conference;
- The possibilities are endless!

To get you started on ideas, in this issue of the newsletter you'll read about some of the specific projects that Teamster women are taking on right now. They are raising money to support important causes, lobbying for political change and becoming leaders within active organizing campaigns. Let us know what you're doing by emailing kdeniz@teamster.org and your story may make it into a future issue.

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have a fundraising event this April.

The Teamsters Ontario Women's Caucus also helps support a shelter for victims of domestic violence. At Christmas time, the group "adopted" families at a shelter in Milton, Ontario. The wish list of items ranged from necessities for the mother to toys for the children.

"We adopted one mother with two children, but the response from our board members and membership was so amazing that we had enough to donate to another family," said Lavinia de Mello, Director of Communications for the Teamsters Ontario Women's Caucus. "This is about women helping women and we intend to continue our support of the shelter."

Political Change

Canadian Teamsters are also involved politically and recently had a major impact on the nation's laws.

A bill was recently introduced in the Canadian Parliament that would have abolished the national long-gun registry requirement. Women's organizations and Teamsters throughout Canada, including the Teamsters Quebec and Ontario Women's Caucuses, lobbied, signed a petition, sent letters to their Members of Parliament and put pressure on politicians to maintain the registry. The registry was created in response to the killing of 14 women at the University of Montreal's L'école Polytechnique in 1989, Canada's worst mass shooting. By a tight final vote of 153-151, the registry was maintained.

The Teamsters Quebec Women's Caucus is now supporting a petition aimed at improving the sick benefits paid by Employment Insurance (EI) to individuals struck by a serious illness. The petition is aimed at increasing the duration of EI sick benefits beyond the current 15 weeks.

This major initiative was launched by Marie-Hélène Dubé, a young mother battling cancer for the third time in five years. Finding herself with no source of income during her convalescence, Dubé decided to fight to change the situation.

"Our union is committed to supporting this extremely important cause because more and more Canadians are touched by grave illnesses like cancer," Sottile said. "We must join forces to send a clear message to Ottawa, and I urge Canadian Teamsters to do everything in their power to have their voices heard."

Save the Date!

Join us at the 2011 Teamsters Women's Conference!

August 26 – 28, 2011

New York, New York

To register go to,
www.teamster.org/content/women

Flying HIGH

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ages other workers to communicate as much and in as many ways as possible with their co-workers.

“We recently got retro checks when we signed our contract and it was fantastic, but right away people on Facebook were sounding the alarm because the check amounts the company sent out were wrong. Within hours the Teamsters responded and addressed the situation with the company so we will get the correct amounts,” Breen said.

Breen notes that Facebook played a critical role in correcting this error. A CAL worker in Rhode Island who got paid the night before workers in other locations around the country posted the discrepancy on Facebook and Breen and others with the company took notice.

While technology is a useful communication tool, Breen also believes one-on-one contact is just as critical. Breen was impressed with the Teamsters during the campaign and talked with her co-workers about organizing, but got even more involved once the merger was announced. Among other activities, Breen participates in a regular communications conference call linking CAL fleet service workers around the country.

“I try to learn more about the union every day and promote why the Teamsters are the best choice. We have seasoned negotiators and a huge organization with resources behind us. It doesn’t matter if you’re a Teamster at UPS or Continental; you’re a Teamster and there’s unity behind you,” Breen said.

Breen also encourages other women to unite to improve their working conditions.

“Stand up and don’t let a man intimidate you into thinking this is a man’s world or man’s industry because it’s not. Women are just as capable,” Breen said.

Sheppard couldn’t agree more. She recognizes time is in short supply for women balancing work and family life, but urges her fellow Teamsters to get involved in any way they can, from going to local union meet-



ings to going online.

“We need to come together, to trust and believe in one another and our union,” Sheppard said. “Our union needs us to get the job done.”

The CAL-UAL election will likely take place during the summer. However, the Teamsters’ campaign is in full swing, with numerous door-knocking blitzes planned in the coming weeks.

To learn more about the CAL campaign, go to www.cal-ualteamsters.com.



A Message from General President James P. Hoffa

The Battle Continues

Haymarket. Homestead. Minneapolis. Detroit. These are storied names in the history of the labor movement. These are places where workers risked it all for their rights, their dignity, their future. Some gave their lives for the cause.

Now, Madison. The protests against Gov. Scott Walker's attempt to destroy workers' rights have ignited a movement that is now sweeping the country like wildfire. Throughout America, people are standing shoulder to shoulder with Wisconsin, with Ohio, with Indiana and, most important, with each other.

"We cannot let this fire go out." "We cannot let this light fade." These are the words of our Teamster brothers and sisters who are holding the line for the rights and protections of working families throughout America. We must seize this moment and understand it for what it is. It is not just a rejuvenation of the labor movement, but an awakening of the entire middle class. It's an awakening to the reality that for 30 years, workers' standard of living and their economic security have been under attack by large corporations and their political stooges.

Today, for the first time in many years, workers, students and minorities are fighting the same war—together.



I was so proud to be a Teamster when I marched into the Wisconsin Statehouse behind the blue Teamster flag with several hundred of my brothers and sisters. You could hear people say to each other, "The Teamsters are here!"

DRIVE is a political committee that furthers labor-related goals, including making contributions to support candidates for local, state and federal offices. Individuals may refuse to join or contribute without fear of reprisal.

Secure Your Future

Build TEAMSTER Power

By Joining DRIVE

Find out more about this exciting program to build Teamster power on the web

www.teamster.org

Visit www.teamster.org

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Women's News



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