

CALENDAR

Tues., Feb. 13

- Deadline for Absentee Ballot requests

Wed., Feb. 28

- Mail ballots due in post office box for morning pickup.
- Election of Business Manager, polls open noon to 7:00 p.m.

- Membership Meeting, 6:15 p.m., Hall 6. *Agenda: Election of Business Manager Nomination and Election of Two Trustees*

- Political Action Committee, 5:30 p.m., Hall 6.

- New Member Orientation, 5:30 p.m., Rm. 244.

Vote!



Notice of Election for Business Manager

As announced in the January newsletter, in accordance with Article 13 of Local 8's Bylaws, this is notification that elections will take place as follows: **February 28 – Election of Business Manager.**

Polls will be open from noon until 7:00 p.m. in the Labor Temple, 2800 First Avenue, Seattle, for the Business Manager position. Mail ballots must be in the post office box in time for the morning pickup on February 28 (mail several days in advance to be sure). If you have not requested a mail ballot in writing prior to the February 13 deadline, you must vote in person in the Labor Temple during the open poll time listed above.

Nominees for Local 8 Business Manager are: **Mike Jung**, who works at the Seattle Housing Authority, and **Suzanne Mode**, current OPEIU Local 8 Business Manager. See their statements on page 2.

Contest!

Come up with a creative slogan for the PAC \$8 for Local 8 Campaign and win a prize.

We all know that the PAC fundraisers are a fun and unique way to raise money for the Political Action Committee, but what some of you may not know is that more important than those events are the monthly contributions made by our rank-and-file members. A lot of our contracts have language that allows us to participate in payroll deduction. In order to spark more interest in donating to the PAC fund, either through payroll deduction or other means, we are going to have a promotion centered around donating \$8 per month to the Local 8 PAC fund.

Get your creative ideas for a slogan in to **Shelby Mooney** by April 6 and the PAC will choose the winner at the April 25 PAC meeting and announce the winning slogan at the regular membership meeting that same night.



Executive Board

Verlene Jones

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Marie Cook

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Cindy Schu

Secretary-Treasurer

Evelyn Bowles

Recording Secretary

Valancy Blackwell

Guy Brook

Brandi Eyerly

Audrey Gunderson

Jaime Martinez

Kellie McGuire

Carmen Paez

Kathi Scott

Kathy Taylor

Karen White

Staff

Suzanne Mode

Business Manager

Cindy Schu

Organizing Director

Shelby Mooney

Organizer

Ligia Velázquez

Union Representative

Mary Maloy

Union Representative

Benita Hyder

Union Representative

Shannon Halme

Union Representative

Paul Bigman

Union Representative

Colleen Shelton

Office Manager

Libby Alejandro

Administrative Secretary

Betty Devereaux

Secretary/Receptionist

Nora Galvin

Secretary/Desktop

Publisher

Mary Silver

Billing Clerk

Statements from Nominees for Business Manager

FROM MIKE JUNG

OPEIU Union Representatives meet with bosses behind closed doors, ignorant of workers' problems on the shop floor. Bosses take advantage of the "warm fuzzies" to starve the workers of wage increases and gut our contracts. **It's time for a change.**

I believe in the power of workers to determine their own fate. The Membership Action Committee is one key to realizing this. We must continuously delve into the pool of talent OPEIU8 represents to grow strong. Current leadership has failed to deliver what members have demanded: **better internal organizing.** We may be growing, but numbers are not enough: we need all our sisters and brothers committed to the struggle.

I was elected Chief Steward of University of Minnesota Clerical Workers Local 3800 (AFSCME) three times. I chaired the negotiating committee, budget committee, and Policy Committee (representing four U of M locals to coordinate contract negotiations). In OPEIU I was elected Shop Steward at SHA and serve on the negotiating committee.

As Business Manager, I will make sure that the workers have the final say, and Union Representatives will live less stressful lives because their shops will have strong internal leadership capable of handling most issues. I will get to know every shop OPEIU represents so I can get to know you. **I will find out all I need to know about your boss from you.** I will spend money on negotiations and grievances to bring back the meaning of a **Living Wage and Just Cause.** Vote for Mike Jung. Mike4OPEIU8@yahoo.com.

FROM SUZANNE MODE

When I look at our accomplishments together these 5 years since being elected your Business Manager, I'm very proud and excited for our future. Under my leadership we've strengthened our Union by organizing and negotiating first contracts for 1,000 new members, maintained a balanced budget, and diligently supported members in their fight for a fair and just workplace.

Through my effective leadership and with active membership involvement, Local 8 has stood up to the most aggressively anti-union employers ... and won. I am a leader who perseveres and is skilled to take on a difficult fight to defend fairness and economic justice.

I am also committed to a democratically run Union with active and critical member participation in all of our Local's important decision making. In 2004 and 2005, over 100 members joined together to map out a plan to ensure representation statewide. As a result, Local 8's membership voted to expand our Executive Board to include members from four geographic regions—changing the makeup of our Executive Board to better reflect our membership for the first time in decades.

We're now in a position to really focus on membership outreach and communication, greater Union visibility in the workplace, recognition for Shop Stewards and other activist members, expanded membership education and strategic contract negotiation campaigns. Our 2007 budget reflects this commitment.

I've been a Local 8 member for 17 years, and I look forward to continuing to build a strong, member run Union. I ask for your continued support and vote.

Payday Lenders: Saviors Or Loan Sharks?

By Ligia Velázquez, Local 8 Representative &
Maya Baxter, Local 8 Member at Solid Ground

Ten years ago, Washington lawmakers legalized the payday lending industry in our state and it has grown into a \$1.4 billion enterprise. For working families in crisis, whether because of emergency healthcare costs or unexpected car repair bills, payday lenders' promise of quick cash and no credit check is enticing. In reality, these short-term loans come at a high cost for workers who are already living paycheck to paycheck.

Payday lenders offer small loans carrying typical interest rates of 391% (APR) to people desperate for quick cash and willing to put up their paycheck to get it. The high fees and interest rates associated with payday loans often lead to an inescapable cycle of debt for the borrower. The standard payday loan in Washington is made for 14 days and, when the loan comes due, the amount of the loan plus a fee is due all at once.

Prior to 1995, financial institutions wishing to make small loans in Washington State were required to cap annual interest rates at 25% with a 4% loan origination fee. However, in 1995, Washington State legalized payday lending, exempting the industry from usury or small loan rate caps, thus giving them preferential treatment. We need to close the payday lender loophole and make payday lenders follow the same laws that other financial institutions are already following.

Payday lending is still illegal in 11 states. Georgia and North Carolina have banned the industry because of the negative impacts on consumers. Last fall, the Republican Congress recognized that predatory payday lending was such a problem that they capped the interest rate on payday loans at 36% for military families. We would like to see those same consumer protections extended to all working families in our state.

Everyone, regardless of their income or ethnicity, has the right to fair and reasonable consumer protections when they borrow money. It is time that Washington lawmakers took action to rein in payday lenders and provide fair and reasonable consumer protections.

Call your legislators and the Governor at 1-800-562-6000 and tell them to support House Bill 1020 because we need the following consumer protections:

- Capping the annual interest rate at 36%
- Providing consumers with longer loan periods, allowing them the opportunity to repay the first loan
- Eliminating post-dated checks as the means for securing a loan
- Banning out-of-state lenders from making internet based payday loans
- Eliminating mandatory arbitration clauses from payday consumer contracts

