

NTEU Chapter 73 News

Tina Wentz, NTEU73 Assistant Chief Steward, assisted an employee regarding FMLA paperwork for her medical problems.

Apparently, the employee was being given the run-around by management. Tina listened to the employee and explained what NTEU could do for her.

Tina then assigned the case to NTEU steward, **Pat Hamilton**. The issue is being addressed and management is no longer ignoring this employee.

In response to the hard work by both stewards, the employee sent an email stating, "I just wanted to write you to say thank you for your time...Pat Hamilton is doing an excellent job. She is really making

sure my issues get addressed."

Tina responded by saying, "That is what NTEU is for, to protect your rights as defined in the National Agreement."

Nice teamwork Tina and Pat! Employees can rest assured knowing they have stewards like you to protect their rights.

NTEU73 Steward, **Tammy Donaldson**, helped Richard Owens regarding a leave situation. Richard is a swing shift employee in ICO/ERS.

Richard expressed his appreciation in an email to Tammy by saying, "I think you brought new life to a communication relationship that was dead. I have had a few brief work exchanges with Lashawn Harris since Friday and felt less intimidated now that I know someone in a steward position is willing to take action, and not only take it but do it promptly as to head-off a situation that could have only deteriorated further if it had been left to fester...Your Professional, but forthright approach was a welcome breath of fresh air."

Thank you, Tammy, for working hard on the many diverse issues that are brought into the union office. Keep up the great work you do for Chapter 73!

Membership Update by NTEU 73 Acting Vice President, **Hansford (Dwight) Cornett**.

Membership continues to rise. More recently, approximately 20 new

walk in members saw the light at the end of the tunnel and walked toward it. This raised our current membership percentages to approximately 75%. With only 5% to go to reach our 80% goal by the 4th of July holiday, we are hoping those who are not members will see this light and also come forward.

NTEU is clearly the best overall investment of your IRS career! Current statistics are showing NTEU has (47) the highest number of cases heading for Arbitration in over 5 years. In addition, there are approximately 20 Appraisal cases, 25 FMLA cases, 10 Leave Denial cases, 5 Sick Leave Restriction Letter cases (1 of which is a mass grievance), 10 Mass Grievances on Failure to Negotiate changes in work procedures and policies, 4 Institutional cases, 5 Hostile Work Environment & Abuse of Power cases, 3 Award type cases, and 5 AWS/TOD cases. That is 134 open cases affecting about 300 - 400 employees.

Are you going to be the next one? NTEU hopes not, but your chances with management's current mind set is extremely high. Don't believe everything your managers say. IF IN DOUBT CHECK IT OUT! Contact your local NTEU and verify what you are being told is correct. NTEU is here to help you and make management follow the National Agreement. When they don't, we file grievances to protect your rights. If you're not a member, JOIN NOW, before your management turns against you.

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Straight from the President's Desk



By Jackie Huff,
NTEU73
President

To Chapter 73 Members:

I would first like to thank all my staff for a wonderful job they have done with the obstacles that has been set forth internally within Chapter 73 during my term. In particular I want to personally thank Tina Wentz and Dwight Cornett for stepping up to the plate and making things work when at times there seems to be no end to the barriers that have been put in front of me and the chapter. I can not thank them enough for looking out for the chapter and our members.

As many of you know this chapter has been running without an elected Vice President for sometime now. Although it has been difficult at times not having an elected VP, the chapter has been operating well. I also have concerns that elected board members who made a commitment to serve the chapter and its members have not attended important board meetings to cast their vote on important issues affecting the chapter and our members. The board members who have attended clearly have the chapter and our members best interest at heart. Thank you, to the elected board members who have attended these meetings.

I have been asked to travel for National NTEU office for negotiations on several occasions which I consider an honor for our chapter. I believe it would best

serve this chapter and our members to put an acting Vice President in office until our elected VP's future with this chapter has been decided.

I am unclear what is happening with our elected VP since he has not contacted me to inquire how our chapter or our members are doing., Nor was I made aware when he left since he did not notify me as the Chapter President and advise me of what his intentions were for our chapter and his elected position.

Dwight Cornett has been working behind the scenes as my assistant and has done an excellent job. I would like all of you to know this and give him a special thanks for this extra effort. I am therefore naming Dwight Cornett as Acting Vice President of NTEU Chapter 73 until further notice.

The Force

“NTEU73’s Hard Hitting Newsletter”

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“To Organize Employees to Work Together To Ensure That Every Federal Employee Is Treated With Dignity and Respect.”

Smoke, Smoke, Smoke That Cigarette

By Heather Phillips,
NTEU73 Steward

Spring has sprung; the grass has risen; but I want to know where the cigarette butts are. The proceeding was for Mr. Larry Heller, Ms. Sue Hansen, Ms. Renee Mitchell and Mr. James Rogers. This group of well meaning management officials wishes to achieve an end while trampling all over the contract and the Union's rights. This group wishes to alter the local smoking agreement. Now whether or not the local agreement needs to be changed or that the unilateral changes management is attempting to make are needed is not the issue. The issue is whether or not management can change a negotiated agreement without renegotiating it. As a recent converted nonsmoker, I realize how offensive cigarette odor can be. I also understand individual concerns over health issues. This may well need to be addressed, however it should be

done in the proper forum. That forum is at the negotiating table. In that forum we can have a free and open exchange of ideas. We can ensure that there will be no adverse impact on any of the employees. We can protect the Union's and the employees' rights.



It is never in your best interest to allow your rights to be surrendered for any reason. If you do, then the very foundation of the labor movement will begin to crumble. Today it is the Smoking Policy, tomorrow it may be the Cell Phone

Policy or the Food and Beverage Policy or the AWS Agreement. This tactic was used in pre World War II days. It started off by affecting a small number or with a righteous issue so that the majority feels that it doesn't affect them so let it go. One by one, rights slip away until one day it will affect **YOU** and then when you look around there will be no one to stand with you.

It may be labeled by some as alarmist thinking, that this is an isolated incident. Or is it? Last month I wrote about a Director who was trying to modify the Cell Phone Agreement without negotiation. We have had several incidents where management has tried to supersede the AWS agreement because it got in the way of their goals. No, this is not about smoking; it is about the right to negotiate and exercise our right and duty to represent the bargaining unit employees.

Writers Wanted

Do you have writing skills?

Do you have information that is newsworthy?

Submit your article to **The Force**.

If your article is accepted, we will print it with or without your name attached; your choice.

Email your submission to NTEU73mailbox@aol.com or bring it to the Union office. Identify it as "article for The Force" **The Force** reserves the right to edit all articles it prints.

NTEU73 Union Office Hours

Fourth Street Office

Monday—Friday 6:00 A.M.—1:00 A.M.
(859) 669-5370

Gateway Center Office Room 511

Monday—Friday 6:00 A.M.—4:00 P.M. & 7:30 P.M.—11:00 P.M.
(859) 669-5700

Industrial Road Retention Center

Monday—Friday 12:30 P.M.—2:30 P.M.
(859) 669-5024

Not a Union member?

**Missing out on all the benefits Union membership brings?
Join Today!**

NTEU Member Benefits

NTEU Bank of America Credit Card

NTEU has teamed with Bank of America to offer the NTEU Platinum Plus MasterCard credit card. Each time you make a purchase with your NTEU/Bank of America Platinum Plus MasterCard, a contribution is made to NTEU—at **no additional cost to you!**

Exceptional Benefits

- No Annual Fee
- Low introductory APR
- Earn WorldPoints® rewards for cash, travel or merchandise
- Generous credit lines as high as \$100,000

World-Class Service

- 24-hour customer service
- Billing dispute advocates
- Instant credit line decisions
- Complete online account access and bill pay features
- Travel planning services
- Cash access at thousands of ATMS worldwide

Complete Security

- Around-the-clock fraud protection
- Zero liability for fraudulent charges
- Secure access to your account online, all the time
- Common Carrier Travel Accident Insurance coverage

To take advantage of this benefit, you must be an NTEU member. Current NTEU members should visit the Member Benefits Section at NTEU's website, www.nteu.org for information on how to apply.

This credit card program is issued and administered by FIA Card Services, N.A. Any account opened shall be governed by the laws of the State of Delaware. The WorldPoints program is managed in part by independent third parties, including a travel agency registered to do business in California (Reg. No. 2036509-50); Ohio (Reg. No. 87890286); Washington (6011237430) and other states as required. MasterCard is a registered trademark of MasterCard International Incorporated, and is used by the issuer pursuant to license. The WorldPoints design and Bill Pay Choice are trademarks and "The most rewarding card of all," WorldPoints, and Platinum Plus are registered trademarks of FIA Card Services, N.A. Bank of America and the Bank of America logo are registered trademarks of Bank of America Corporation. All other company product names and logos are the property of others and their use does not imply endorsement of, or an association with, the WorldPoints program.

Time to get your ducks in a row. Your income is Important - Protect it.

Don't miss out on our income protection plan.
Enrolling now, you can qualify for:

- ◆ Up to 66% of your income - Max. \$2000 monthly.
- ◆ Choose a plan that will pay benefits up to 24 months.
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**Guarantee Issue if actively at work full-time.
With NO medical examination or health questions.**

Schedule a meeting at your office today by calling:
Nathan at American Insurnet 513-505-4488.



Ocean Front Property in Kentucky?

By Hansford (Dwight) Cornett,
NTEU73 Act

FOH and LR “hard facts”, they’re not so credible!

Are you sick and occasionally needing time off sick and you are getting flack for it from your manager? Or, are you having problems with the FMLA process and the FOH doctors?

If so, YOU NEED to be a MEMBER of NTEU. Labor Relations and/or FOH doctors are telling management that the FOH doctor spoke with your doctor and “they mutually agreed to reduce the number of days off on your FMLA form”. If you just automatically believe this, you could be sold some Ocean Front Beach Property in Kentucky!

FOH doctors are in many cases NOT contacting your doctor at all before making changes to your FMLA forms/paperwork; LR is taking it upon themselves to just do it. Don’t be a victim, get a copy of the FOH results if you can! Call your doctor’s office and verify what you’re being told. If it isn’t true and YOU ARE A MEMBER, come let us help.

More recently FOH doctors and LR began belittling the entire FMLA process and violating law through their deceit and the deception of employees.

If you are a member and having problems, or need questions answered, contact your nearest NTEU office for assistance.

Kelley Renews Call for Pay Parity

Washington, D.C.—The leader of the nation’s largest independent union of federal employees today applauded a key Senate committee for approving a bill that would provide a 3.9 percent pay raise for military personnel in fiscal year 2009, a half a percent more than the President requested. She also renewed her call to Congress to continue the long tradition of pay parity between federal civilian employees and members of the military.

National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) President Colleen M. Kelley said that the pay raise included in the mark up of the National Defense Authorization Bill by the Senate Armed Services Committee is well deserved considering the essential services provided by the men and women who wear our country’s uniform and called on Congress to approve a similar 3.9 percent pay hike for federal civilian employees. The White House budget blueprint, released in February, calls for only a 3.4 percent raise for members of the military and a 2.9 percent raise for the federal civilian workforce.

A 3.9 percent pay hike would reflect the applicable Employment Cost Index (ECI) of 3.4 percent, plus one-half of one percent, which is the formula that has been used in recent years. The ECI is put together by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and reflects employment costs across the country.

In light of the fact that a significant number of current federal employees will reach retirement eligibility over the next few years, the NTEU leader said that the real question is the government’s ability to recruit and retain talented employees who are highly-sought after by private employers.

Fair and adequate raises also would help close the acknowledged gap in pay between civilian federal workers and the private sector—currently standing at an average of 23 percent. Closing the gap with the private sector was the stated goal of the 1990 Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act (FEPCA), which created a system of locality pay but which has not been implemented as intended since its enactment.

Any failure to attempt to close the public-private sector pay gap will put the federal government at a further disadvantage with the private sector in hiring, she said.

There is nothing more important than having free speech rights when you need them. That's why NTEU is committed to protecting and securing your workplace rights.

1938—2008



National EEODAC Committee

Paul Bogenschutz has been assigned to the National Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Advisory Council (EEODAC) Committee for NTEU. Paul requested that Jackie submit his name for this position since he has had prior experience with our local EEODAC. When Colleen Kelley went out to all the Chapter Presidents to ask who they had in mind to serve on this National Committee, Jackie elected Paul Bogenschutz.

Congratulations Paul! We are sure you will represent Chapter 73 and NTEU as a whole while serving on this committee.

Retirees Get Their Own NTEU Web Page

Federal retirees-and those preparing for retirement-have a new source for information and resources on everything from COLAs and life insurance to health care costs and sick leave credit.

NTEU's new web page for retirees in your one stop for these resources, as well as explanations and updates on legislation affecting retirees. There are also links to helpful web sites where federal employees can get information on retirement benefits, eligibility and tips for preparing to retire.

NTEU Backs FEHBP Improvements

According to the NTEU e-Bulletin, along with working to raise the age for dependent coverage, NTEU is building support for legislation that would make health care more affordable for the nine million participants in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP).

H.R. 1256 would increase the government's share of health benefit premium payments for federal employees and retirees from an average of 72 percent to an average of 80 percent.

For more information on NTEU's legislative efforts visit, <http://capwiz.com/nteu/home/>

NTEU Celebrates Our 70th Anniversary

From a Small Gathering of Federal Workers to 150,000 Strong...

Civil service protections, fair salaries and improved working conditions. Those were the goals of a group of Wisconsin IRS employees who formed an organization back in 1938. Seventy years later, that organization has grown into the National Treasury Employees Union, representing 150,000 employees at 31 different federal agencies. And while NTEU has amassed a long list of significant gains touching almost every aspect of the lives of federal employees, the union's founding goals remain the same. Our work continues to secure enhanced workplace rights and protections. NTEU is grateful for the strong support of our members, without whom our success and growth over the years would not have been possible.



Action on Capitol Hill — whether in the halls or on the grounds — has been an integral part of NTEU's history

It began in 1938, in Wisconsin, when a group of workers known as Internal Revenue Collectors formed an organization they hoped would lead them to civil service protection, secure fair salaries and improve their working conditions. It was known as the National Association of Employees of Collectors of the Internal Revenue (NAECIR).

In 1952, the Internal Revenue Bureau became the Internal Revenue Service. NAECIR, which had won the protections of the competitive service, reorganized as well. It changed its name to the National Association of Internal Revenue Employees (NAIRE) and embarked on an ambitious effort to attract new members. NAIRE was hampered, however, by a strong IRS management influence.

That changed in the 1960s, and most particularly at the 1967 national convention, when delegates adopted the constitution that forms the foundation for today's National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU). Thus began the transformation from social club to the strongest federal sector union—including expansion far beyond its roots in the IRS to establish bargaining units in more than 31 federal agencies and departments.

As it reaches its 70th year, no union has done more to shape the face of the modern federal workplace. NTEU sets the standard for bargaining achievements; has refined the process of organizing new members; consistently provides the most effective workplace representation; and has a well-earned reputation as the most active and successful union in both the courtroom and on Capitol Hill, where so much of what impacts the lives of federal employees is decided.

The Accomplishments

What has NTEU done in the past 70 years? Here are just a few of our accomplishments for federal employees:

- Won **\$533 million in back pay** for federal employees when an appeals court ruled against President Nixon's 1972 pay raise deferral.
- Secured a permanent **child care tuition assistance program**.
- Won **enhanced Law Enforcement Officer retirement benefits** for CBP Officers.
- Aggressively pushed for **Flexible Spending Accounts**.
- Secured an expansion of the ability to contribute to or modify contributions to the federal **Thrift Savings Plan**.
- Won a **dental-vision plan**.
- **Compensatory time for travel** and **Alternative Work Schedules** became a possibility when NTEU backed legislative changes to allow them.
- Won a federal court ruling that employees have the **right to review promotion files**.
- Secured expanded **political and legislative action rights** of federal employees.
- Won three federal court decisions declaring portions of the **DHS personnel rules** illegal.
- Beat back an IRS attempt to close dozens of its **Taxpayer Assistance Centers** nationwide.
- Won a **first-ever court victory** against an agency's illegal use of appropriated funds to give federal jobs to a contractor without giving employees the chance to compete.



GWC office x5700

4th Street office x5370

IRRC office x5024

TENTH Annual UNION OUTING
Saturday, May 24, 2008



11490 Hamilton-Cleves Road, Hamilton, OH 45013

GATES OPEN AT 12:00 PM AND THE PARK CLOSES AT 7:00 PM

**NTEU73 will provide all the rides including the train, sodas, cotton candy, popcorn and snow cones.
We will also provide free mini golf.**

Picnic lunches are permitted in the park, but will be searched by Hamilton Co Deputies. NO ALCOHOL can be brought into the park.

**For your convenience, Stricker's Grove offers the following food prices:
Cheeseburgers \$2.00, hamburgers \$1.75, metts or brats \$1.50, hot dogs \$1.25.
Sliced onions, pickles, catsup and mustard will be available.
You can add a bag of potato chips, potato salad and baked beans
for an additional \$2.50.**

**Members will be given up to six admission wrist bands free.
Up to four additional bands may be purchased for \$2.00 each.
Wrist bands can be picked up beginning Monday May 12, 2008:
IRRC union office 12:30 pm – 2:30 pm
GWC union office 7:00 am —11:00 am and 8:00 pm—11:00 pm
4th St union office 7:00 am —11:00 am and 8:00 pm —11:00 pm**

All Chapter 73 members are invited !