

Local 2398

March 2012

Staff & Clerical Federation, AFT, AFT-Wisconsin, AFL-CIO
Chippewa Valley Technical College, Eau Claire
<http://wi.aft.org/CVTC2398/>

From the President



We are on the final months of our contract, and what will life be like for us after that? Are we still going to have our union? What will our union be able to do without a contract?

Those are just some of the questions and concerns I've heard. Well, I'll tell you exactly what your union is going to do! We are going to stay as strong as we possibly can, and keep working to ensure that we have a voice in the workplace! We WILL continue to advocate for members, and ensure that they are being treated fairly. That will never change.

There is only one thing that I can think of to give me piece of mind; my union membership! I see my membership as an insurance policy; I may not always need to file a claim, but I know if something happens, I have protection. I know that I will have resources available to me that only come with union membership. I know that someone will be there for me when I need them.

On that note, I hope you will join your union in a celebration of membership social gathering on **Thursday, March 29!** I look forward to seeing you there!

We have a tough road ahead of us, but together, we can get through anything.

Solidarity Forever,

Lisa

What Do I Get From My Dues?

What Does AFT Do For Me?

The national Union provides resources for on-going staff support and assistance to all Wisconsin AFT local unions, and has been stepping up that assistance even before the Walker attack on public sector unions here. That regular assistance helps keep AFT-W staff up-to-date and available for locals, and helps in the professional development of AFT-W staff and officers. Beyond that day-to-day assistance, AFT national also offers:

- Annual professional development and educational conferences for K-12 teachers, for higher education faculty, for support staff workers, and for public sector employees

- Annual collective bargaining conferences to keep up with latest developments around the county
- Annual Union Leadership Institutes for local leaders and members to help build strong local unions
- Daily communications for local leaders and members about developments in their field and in education in general
- Extensive web-based resources, like Leadernet, to help local leaders and members communicate, organize, bargain, and bring members together
- Extensive AFT+ member benefits, including
 - Entertainment and shopping discounts
 - Travel discounts
 - Legal assistance
 - Insurance discounts
 - For a full view of AFT+ benefits, see www.aft.org/benefits

What Does AFT-Wisconsin Do For Me?

AFT-Wisconsin is responsible for working directly with all Wisconsin AFT locals, solving workplace problems and representing members on a daily & regular basis. AFT-W staff and officers constitute a readily available professional resource for local leaders and members when problems arise at work, when members are disciplined, when locals face difficult bargaining, and especially recently, when locals need to organize and reach out to members in ways they've never done before. Beyond that representation and professional assistance, AFT-W offers:

- Annual training for leaders and members at AFT-W's own Union Leadership Institute
- Legal assistance from AFT-W's attorney
- Conferences and workshops on building stronger local unions
- An on-going voice and presence at the state capitol on all policy issues affecting members
- Web-based resources on its webpage to help members and leaders get the information they need when they need it (www.aft-wisconsin.org)

What Happens When Our Contract Expires?

What will happen to our working conditions in July 2012 – our pay, our benefits, the work rules we negotiated in past agreements?

Good question. When the contract ends, the new law forbids us from bargaining a new one, and the current contract will no longer be in place. We'd like to be involved when the College decides what to do about our working conditions, and we have asked the College to talk with us about any changes.

Can the College make any changes it wants to after June 30, 2012?

Theoretically yes, since we won't have a contract. There are still College policies that the College will need to follow. We want to make sure we're involved – now – in any discussions about what policies will take the place of the current agreement.

What changes should we expect in July 2012?

That's hard to say, but we expect to learn more as time goes on. We've seen what the College has proposed during past negotiations; we know some of the things they'd like to change. The new law gives them the power to make changes without 'bargaining', but that doesn't mean they have to make those changes.

Again, most important for us will be getting the College to agree to talk with us before making changes. That's our goal – to be involved in decisions that affect us. The College has said it intends to talk with teachers about changes; we'll have to make sure they keep their word on that. Our simple position is that they should honor the terms of our former contracts and talk with us about any changes they're considering.

What's the union's position on changes the College might want to make?

As stated above, and it's no surprise to the College, we want to maintain current conditions and benefits as they now stand. We want to be involved in discussion **before** the College makes changes. We're not opposed to all changes the College may want to make – that will depend on what the change is. We're asking that the College agree to talk with us about changes, and we'll need your support for that position.

Will the union still bargain with the College after July 2012? How will that work?

Yes, but the new law limits our bargaining to base wages only, and limits any increases to inflation - the CPI (Consumer Price Index). That won't be anything like bargaining used to be, but even with such ridiculous restrictions on formal bargaining, support staff unions will still be able to advocate and organize around issues, and ask to meet to discuss these issues with administrations. We will have the ability, as a union, to meet with their employer and come to agreements around almost every issue that a legal collective bargaining agreement

There is a long history of this kind of "negotiation" both nationally and in Wisconsin, in which public employees negotiated binding agreements with their employers prior to gaining legal bargaining rights in 1959. In such a system, our right to bargain comes not from legislation, but from our union's mandate. That mandate will come from wide-ranging support for our union in its fight to maintain good working conditions in our schools and colleges. It will also require a high membership rate going forward – we must be able to show that our union is **the** voice for support staff here at CVTC.

Why should I continue as a member in the union when we no longer can bargain as we did before?

As discussed above, even without full bargaining rights after July 2012, we can still meet, negotiate, and advocate on issues with administration. We intend to do that. But beyond that, our union is our vehicle for making the political change needed to move forward. We have a plan to win back our bargaining rights. We've already unseated two Republican state senators. We're working on the recall of Governor Walker, and other Senators. We'll continue to work with organizations and citizens who stand with us for our rights. We'll pursue a long-term campaign to reclaim real bargaining rights and protect the high quality public education that Wisconsin deserves.

How will I pay dues, if it's not possible to pay them through payroll deduction?

The new law forbids the College from taking dues out of our checks, as it has in the past, starting in July 2012. Our Local is working on ways to make paying your dues as easy and safe as possible. By spring 2012, you will have the option of paying through a bank draft – a regular deduction from your checking account at your bank – by using your credit card, or possibly paying by check. No matter which way you choose, please be assured your financial information will be treated safely and

securely. By paying your dues, you'll be doing your part to keep our union strong and vibrant, and to make sure Walker's attack on public employees doesn't succeed. More information about how you'll be able to pay dues will be available soon.

Why should I still pay dues after my paycheck has taken a hit?

This is definitely a hard time to be a public employee – we're all facing anywhere from an 8 to 12% pay cut because of the Governor's budget repair bill. But unless we come together right now, we'll never have the ability to regain our full bargaining rights and bargain again for fair compensation and benefits, and we won't have the membership we need to negotiate with the administration from a position of strength. We need to pool our efforts, our experience – and our resources – to have the power we'll need to restore Wisconsin's commitment to worker rights.

Questions? For more information, please contact Local 2398 President Lisa Storms at stormсли23@yahoo.com

From the Social Committee

Save the Dates!!

- Highway cleanup is Saturday, May 5. Watch for details in April. You can earn a wellness point by participating in this event, plus you never know what you might find. One member found a valid \$20 gift certificate at a cleanup a couple of years ago!
- Local 2398 will be serving at the Community Table on Saturday, September 29. This, too, is an opportunity to earn a wellness point.

Baby Report

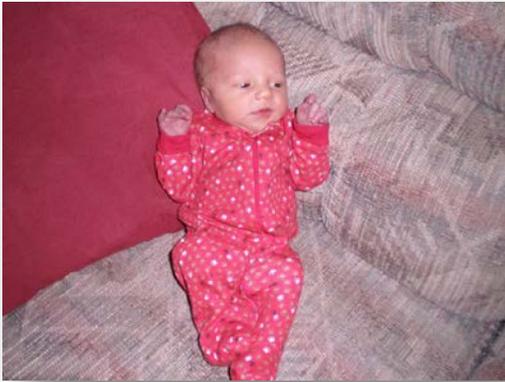


Arya Jane LaBlanc was born January 9, 2012, at 12:45 p.m. to Elaine Miller's daughter Stacie. She was due January 26, but the doctor decided to deliver her on January 9. She was 6 lbs. and 17 in long.



Joyce Linderholm became a grandma on February 27 when Nolan William Adams was born at 3:10 p.m. He weighed 8 pounds, 14-1/2 ounces and was 21-1/4 inches long.

Baby Report - Continued



Tristan Gregory Hondel was born on January 13, 2012.

Tristan's proud grandma is Marcia Finseth.

Miscellaneous



Emma Duncanson, MD, of Fairview Ridges Clinic & Hospital in Burnsville, has successfully earned her Board Certification in Internal Medicine from the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM).

ABIM works to enhance the quality of health care by certifying internists and subspecialists who demonstrate the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for excellent patient care. A growing body of research suggests that Board Certified physicians deliver higher quality care than noncertified physicians. Board Certification demonstrates to the public that physicians have met the highest standards of internal medicine and its subspecialties. Board Certification is voluntary and includes an exam that tests a physician's ability to diagnose and treat patients with a broad range of conditions.

Emma's mother is Deb Duncanson.

Thank You

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the members of Local 2398 for the beautiful floral/plant arrangement my family received over the loss of our son, Adam. It was very much appreciated, and the plants will be a reminder of your thoughtfulness, as will the many cards we received. Again, thanks.

Bev Hilton

Union Meetings

Our upcoming union meetings will be held on the following dates and times:

March 20 - 11:30 a.m.
April 17 - 12 noon

May 15 - 11:30 a.m.
June 19 - 12 noon

All dates are Tuesdays.

Mark Your Calendar!

LOCAL 2398
CELEBRATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Thursday, March 29, 2012

4–7 p.m.

**At America's Best Value Inn - Rosewood I
(Next to O'Leary's)
809 Clairemont Avenue, Eau Claire**

**Short Program at 5 p.m. to include:
Guest Speakers
Hold Your Fire – Music Video
Question & Answer Session**

**Come and enjoy conversation with your co-workers!
Hors D'oeuvres and soft drinks provided.**

***R.S.V.P. for planning purposes to Lisa Storms
(lstorms@cvtc.edu or 715-833-6347)***



A Union of Professionals

CVTC's Centennial

The third Monday of every month is Spirit Monday. Remember to wear CVTC apparel on those Mondays. Starting in April, those participating will be eligible for some cool prizes. Centennial Man will be providing details on how to get your name in the drawings, so watch your email!

Word Tip

You can use the Go To function to jump to an approximate position in your document. This is similar to clicking on the vertical scroll bar marker and dragging it an approximate percentage down the scroll bar. To do this using the Go To function, use this technique:

1. Press **F5**. Word displays the Go To tab of the Find and Replace dialog box.
2. Make sure that Page is selected as the type of item you want to go to.
3. In the text box, enter the numeric percentage and a percent sign. The order of these two does not matter (you can type the percent sign before or after the number). For instance, you could enter **75%** or **%75**.
4. Click on Go To.

Thanks to all who contributed to the newsletter.

The end!