



Solidarity Now!

Communication Workers of America

Local 4730, Bloomington and Northwest Campuses, Indiana University

Poplars Building Room 331, (812) 855-8508

<http://www.indiana.edu/~cwa/>

January-February 2008
Volume 25, Number 1

State of the Union

Peter Kaczmarczyk

As I sit down to write about the state of the union, I realize I don't want to compose some long-winded 'the union is doing great' piece. It's true, but it gets boring. I will say that, just as I wrote two years ago, 'The State of the Union is Strong!', but beyond that I'm tempted to let the 'rah rah' stuff be.

We do continue to provide excellent representation with our stewards, and a recent burst of organizational fervor should make us even better. It is true that we had a direct impact on mitigating the effects of outsourcing on staff and stand ready to do so again when it rears its ugly head in the coming months. I can also state that we recently won a battle on behalf of a staff person in a place we have had few successes in the past. This victory was

Food Drive Results

Charla Lancaster

A big "THANK YOU" to everyone who donated food and money to the 2nd Annual CWA Food Drive this year. It was a huge success. We collected \$71.00 in cash and 712 pounds of food. Hoosier Hills Food Bank employees told me that this is just as much as the local grocers collect in their bins in a month! Last year, we collected just over 550 pounds of food and \$20.00 in cash, so we did even better this year. We were also fortunate to have a beautiful day in which to collect the food. Thanks for the efforts of all the volunteers that helped to gather the large assortment of goods. I am ready to do this again, so start collecting when you see those sales come up! You don't have to spend a lot to make a difference.

very satisfying and a sign of hope for all the down-trodden staff in the darker parts of campus.

All this and more indicates the state of the union is strong. If you want more details, you can read back through the past newsletters, or talk to someone who has been helped by the union. I also recommend that you get to know your policy manual and think about what working at IU could be like without some of the rights spelled out in it, rights to which the union has contributed and for which we will continue to fight.

So we are strong, except for one vital area—membership! Why don't more of you join? This eats at me, and I truly cannot understand why more support staff don't see the value of having a union. If there is one area where the union falls short, it is in our ability to gain and retain members. Simply put, we need you, so join now!

Hopefully you will never need us directly, but if you do we will be there. Every day you work in an environment made better by the fact that support staff have a union. The union is strong and getting stronger. You can help by joining now.



Left to right: Joe Spencer, Charla Lancaster of CWA 4730, Dan Taylor, and Jennie Rasmussen.

Myth Busting or Merit Awards and PA Jobs

Peter Kaczmarczyk

One of the persistent myths that seems to circulate around campus is that being a member of the union will hurt you or be frowned upon by management. This is simply not true, and events of the last year have really brought this home to me. Every year the university presents Merit Awards to two support staff, two service maintenance staff and two PA's. This year's winners of the support staff awards were Angela Miller and Terry Stigall. They are both deserving winners; one is also a union member.

Terry Stigall has been a member of CWA Local 4730 since 1994 and is one of our finest stewards. She is definitely not quiet about her involvement in the union, and it certainly did not seem to hurt her here. Looking over the list, I see several other union members and one former member who was just as outspoken as Terry. Here too one can see no evidence of any bias against union members, and the same is true if you go back to previous years and look at the nominees and winners.

Then there is the issue of PA's. In the last year or so the local has lost over half a dozen members, because they moved into PA jobs. These folks included Mitch Rice, our VP at the time, and two other people who were regular attendees of meetings and were becoming active in the union. All these people applied for and got these jobs. There seems to be no indication that their union membership and activism had any detrimental effect.

I will admit there are bound to be managers who might harbor a bias. To that I say it is nobody's business if you are a member; you don't have to tell them. These are the types of managers who need to be watched and **should** have union members working for them.

So does being a union member hurt your job prospects at IU? Based on the data I have looked at, the answer is a resounding no, and that's one less reason not to join.

**Plan to attend *your* CWA Local 4730
membership meetings.**

**We meet on the third Thursday of every month in the
Poplars Building, Room 185
5:30—6:30 P.M.**



LOCAL 4730
**Communication Workers
of America, AFL-CIO**

I hereby request full membership, and all the benefits that go with it, in Communications Workers of America (C.W.A) Local 4730. I authorize with this form my membership and the deduction of dues from my pay as established by C.W.A.

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Home address _____

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Signature _____

Date _____

Received by _____

Please return this form to CWA Local 4730,
400 East 7th Street, Poplars Bldg., Room 331,
Bloomington, IN 47405

Since you asked.....

Linda Harl

What will construction of the new music building do to the parking lot behind Sycamore Hall? In the pictures, it appears that access will be completely cut off.

Robert Meadows, University Architect, replies, "At the present time, we have not done any work on the design beyond developing a program and an illustration depicting the approximate size of the new building. It is likely that the sharp curve in the road leading to the lot from Jordan will be modified. At the present time, the building is not projected to go into the parking lot area."

The Peripheral Damage of Outsourcing

Jane Goldsmith

Much has been said about the direct effects of outsourcing jobs to outside firms—displacement of employees, lowered morale of the remaining employees, and increased level of distrust by the rank and file towards the management who made the outsourcing decision. I am sure there are many other direct effects that can be cited. However, the recent outsourcing of the motor pool and bookstore has brought to light some peripheral damage to the university community as well.

Because of the work they do, some departments use the motor pool much more often than others. For instance, the Geology Department uses motor pool vehicles frequently, because they have to go to the rocks—the rocks won't come to them. The Theatre Department stages plays at the Brown County Playhouse (BCP), and they must use vehicles to transport the students and employees involved. The increased cost of using Enterprise is now placing a drain on these departmental budgets. They will have to cut their budgets in other areas or increase revenues to compensate for the higher costs of renting through Enterprise. So what will they cut or increase? Fewer grad students to teach their classes and supervise their digs? Fewer digs? Fewer plays and/or increased ticket prices at the BCP? Cuts to the set, costume and lighting designs at the BCP? The "campus" took the money obtained from Enterprise for the motor pool duties, and no additional money was allocated to the heavier users of the motor pool. So they will have to compensate somehow. And who knows what they will deem they must discard or how they will increase revenue. They may potentially price themselves out of their markets.

Until the bookstore was outsourced to Barnes & Noble, students who were receiving financial aid from the

university could "charge" their bookstore textbook purchases to their Bursar bill. They could have the material they needed for their classes and, when their financial aid came in, the bookstore charge would be paid. One third of the students on campus were eligible for this feature, and many were using it. Since Barnes & Noble is now running the bookstore, students have lost this benefit. So how do they take care of these charges now? Short term loans? Just don't buy the books? Get behind in their classes?

Many people in the university will not be affected by these situations. After all, didn't the administration get millions of dollars for selling off these auxiliary services that they can use as they want? But it's not just the displaced workers who are being affected. As the university continues to outsource auxiliary services, the chances that all of us will be affected will increase.

Indifference is harder to fight than hostility, and there is nothing that kills an agitation like having everybody admit that it is fundamentally right.

CRYSTAL EASTMAN, social/political activist and author

Bargaining Time

Peter Kaczmarczyk

Spring is coming, which means it is once again time to enter into bargaining with the university. This year we will be bargaining on both wages and policy. The bargaining team is already hard at work preparing, and our survey to members has gone out in the mail. We want to hear from you, so please send it back. It is streamlined and fairly simple this year.

Didn't get a survey? You must not be a member. Only members can give formal feedback, and only members can vote on the agreement. So if you want a voice, join now. We are always interested in what all staff have to say, but only those who join, who pay dues and support the union, get a voice and a vote.

Solidarity Now!

Editorial Staff

Carole Baynes

Gayla Bradfield

Jane Goldsmith

Linda Harl

Peter Kaczmarczyk

Jim Opiat

Bernadette Robinson-Kinzer

IU Employee Assistance Program Helps Staff at No Cost

Carole Baynes

Are you stressed out, depressed, or trying to cope with a personal situation that you fear is compromising your job performance? Remember that University Human Resource Services has established the confidential Indiana University Employee Assistance Program (IUEAP). Services start with a confidential phone call to 1-888-234-8327, available 24/7. EAP professionals will advise you on how they can help with concerns such as:

- Divorce and separation
- Conflict in the workplace
- Parent-child conflicts
- Stress
- Care of elderly parents
- Relationship problems
- Grief and loss
- Phase of life adjustments
- Customized group counseling in the workplace for traumatic situations

Trained professionals will make an initial assessment and then, if necessary, refer you to an EAP network licensed clinician or other local resources. Referrals may be made for up to three face-to-face counseling visits. Mental health counseling is not provided by phone, but there will be a response to suicide threats or physical abuse. **All full-time IU staff and their household members are eligible, and the cost is paid by the university.**

You don't have to suffer alone with your problems. Please call for help at 1-888-234-8327, or for more information go to university benefits at <http://www.indiana.edu/~uhrs/benefits/eap.html>. Summary of Plan Provisions brochures are available in the Human Resources office at Poplars, E165.

It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

Children are natural mimics who act like their parents despite every effort to teach them good manners.

MARK TWAIN

A Health Care Story

Peter Kaczmarczyk

In late October my father became sick and was eventually diagnosed with lymphoma. He has been undergoing chemotherapy, and as of the time I write this, the expectation is that he will make a full recovery. The reason I'm telling you this is because he lives in France and is covered under the French health care system, which puts me in a good position to make a few observations about how it worked for him.

In the diagnostic process, some of the waits for the needed tests seemed long (week from Tuesday? Arrgh!), but they were eventually conducted. After narrowing things down, they concluded that he had a fairly rare, acute, non-genetic form of lymphoma. Shortly after the diagnosis, he began chemotherapy. Just like the tests, it was done at what I'm told is an excellent hospital.

Between rounds of chemotherapy, my father was not in the hospital, but rather stayed at a state of the art hospice-like facility, just a few miles from his home, where he received around-the-clock care and monitoring. I visited him there for seven straight days and had no indication he was receiving anything but the best of care.

So there we are. The system has worked, and my father has gotten top tier service. And the best part? No crippling bills. My father's family, which includes his two teenage daughters, will not be saddled with huge expenses that will control, if not ruin, their lives for years. There may be some expense—my father tells me that his colon surgery generated a \$60 bill, but it is essentially all paid for, as it should be.

I understand the French system has problems—the economy is ugly, the unemployment rate is very high, and we won't talk about those pesky transit unions. However the health care system, at least in this case, worked just the way it should. Isn't it time we tried the same kind of thing here?

Be not simply good; be good for something.

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David Tucker, owner

Bowl for Kids Sake

Peter Kaczmarczyk

For the third year running we have put together a team to help raise money for Big Brothers/Big Sisters through their Bowl For Kids Sake fundraiser at Suburban Lanes. We are currently taking pledges. Please go to <http://communitybowl.kintera.org/faf/search/searchTeamPart.asp?ievent=251889&team=2684438> to see our team and make a pledge, or contact one of the bowlers to make a pledge directly to them.

This is always a lot of fun, and the more money we can raise, the more fun it should be. We bowl on Feb. 23, 2:00-3:45 p.m., so don't procrastinate. Please pledge now. If you are looking for more information or have any questions, contact Elly Romer (ecromer@indiana.edu), our fearless bowling leader. If you want to see us make fools of ourselves on the lanes, then come on out and watch us bowl.



CWA 4730 Bowl For Kids Sake Team - 2006



CWA 4730 Bowl For Kids Sake Team - 2007

A Winter's Tale

Peter Kaczmarczyk

Whenever the weather turns particularly cold, I always make an effort to put out extra food for the birds. Raccoons, squirrels, and the occasional stray cat—they all know to stop by when things start to get tough. They depend on me, and I like to make sure that I am always there for them.

As I filled the feeders on a recent weekend, I couldn't help but think about the workers at GE. They had just learned that they were to be turned out into the cold and might soon need a helping hand. I hoped that in our community there were people, groups, and employers who could step up and help them through the tough times.

If early actions are any indication, many in our community and beyond are going to step up to help. I'm sure it's not enough, but it's a start. Still, as I watched the birds shooting on and off the feeders, the snow gently swirling around them, I worried. And I thought about my employer, Indiana University.

With every job loss, IU becomes a stronger force in our community and with that come responsibilities. In many ways IU meets those responsibilities, such as through their support of the United Way. In many ways, however, they do not. Now, in this time when our community could use all the help it can get, with costs rising and jobs disappearing, IU needs to step up. I suggest two ways:

- 1) No more outsourcing. Make a statement that IU will not outsource or privatize any more jobs. Make it clear and unambiguous. Our community cannot handle any more good jobs turning into poor ones.
- 2) Give staff a real raise—a real one. One that goes beyond the cost of living, the cost of gas, the cost of health care. One that makes up for the abysmal raises of the last several years. One that will make a real difference in the lives of IU staff. One that will actually give staff money to spend in our community, to help merchants, to create jobs, to keep our community alive and vibrant. IU must give staff a real raise. Nothing else should be acceptable.

So this I thought on a cold winter's day. After all, I had no Colts game to look forward to. Why should I not think of the needs of our brothers, sisters, families and friends? I try to do what I can for them, just as I do for my adopted family that lives in the woods. Now I can only hope that Indiana University will do the same for its family.

Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage.

ANAIS NIN

CWA Calendar

February 2008

Thursday, February 21, 2008

Members Meeting
Poplars Bldg., Room 185
5:30-6:30 P.M.

Executive Board Meeting
Poplars Bldg., Room 185
6:30-7:00 P.M.

Wednesday, February 27, 2008

WRCLC Meeting
840 West 17th Street, Suite 9
7:00 P.M.

March 2008

Thursday, March 20, 2008

Members Meeting
Poplars Bldg., Room 185
5:30-6:30 P.M.

Executive Board Meeting
Poplars Bldg., Room 185
6:30-7:00 P.M.

Wednesday, March 26, 2008

WRCLC Meeting
840 West 17th St., Suite 9
7:00 P.M.



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