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UNIFORMED EMT'S, PARAMEDICS & FIRE INSPECTORS—F.D.N.Y.
LOCAL 2507, DC-37, AFSCME AFL-CIO
Tel: 718-371-0310 • Fax: 718-371-0318

UEP Bulletin

STATE OF THE UNION

BY ISRAEL MIRANDA, *President*

Fraternal Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to begin by thanking each of you for your continued support for the leadership of this Local. The trust you have placed in us is not taken for granted, nor is it misplaced. While we continue to move ahead on an electronic format for this newsletter, we think it is important to update you on some issues on the horizon.

As many of you are aware, our parent council DC-37 recently began contract negotiations for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement.

While we are not a part of these negotiations, some aspects will affect us. I have included in this newsletter a summary of the city's demands (see page 7).

The city proposes a contract which for the most part mirrors the agreement between the State and the CSEA.

In addition to a five year agreement for zeros and two's, the city is seeking higher contributions for health care, pensions and reductions in their contribution to your prescription plan. The city also seeks to eliminate any preferences for seniority and the ability to change your schedule as they please.

As you can see, although the Mayor has just two years left in his final term, he seems bent on inflicting as much pain as possible on working people as he heads out the door.

No Union can achieve its goals without the support and the involvement of their members. We should ask ourselves not "What would I like" but rather "What do we feel is needed" and "What is right". Your Executive Board understands the challenges moving forward and will continue to protect our benefits. We must prepare to act and respond to healthcare reform, pension reform, and civil service reform among other issues.

This coming year will also bring elections for the New York State Senate and



Assembly. Given that pension reform must be passed in Albany, it will be important for us to step up our game come election season. On a more local level, the next mayoral race will begin immediately after the Albany races have concluded. Whether or not you have participated in election activities before, over the next two years you will need to be involved.

The Mayor has also called for additional cuts to all agencies for the remainder of this fiscal year as well as next year. I assure you that we are and will continue to do everything possible to protect your interests. We have grown in head count and continue to expand our ambulance coverage in New York City. We have opened new stations and have several scheduled to open in 2012.

In closing, to engage in our future we need your support, strength and unity moving forward. I again thank each of you for the faith and trust you have bestowed in me.

In Solidarity

Israel Miranda
President

In Unity There Is Strength

BE THANKFUL!

BY JOE CONZO, *Vice President*

Be Thankful! William Devaughn's classic 1972 hit record sings about not having what the next person has or doesn't have and to be "Thankful for what you got."

Fast forward 40 years and those words are so true. With all that is going on in the world today and across the nation, I have to be "Thankful for what I got."

This year has brought so many deaths and destructions across the world with Earthquakes, Tsunamis, famine and social change. We have to be grateful that it has not hit our shores. Across our seas, nations are still dealing with rebuilding from these tragic events. I can't imagine anybody going thru this worrying about what type of pants to wear at work or being able to write a parking ticket because a double parked car is blocking your way.

With the attacks on the Labor movement across the country, we have been spared so far in being on the receiving end.

Collective bargaining rights, pension reform and health care coverage are being attacked across the country because some Politicians blame "Labor" for their mess.

Many men and women have put their lives on the line so "we"

can have the rights we have when it comes to decent work wages, decent health coverage and a decent pension.

We have been fortunate that our rank and file has grown these last few years.

Other city agencies have had layoffs or little growth, if any, but yet "we" still have all that we have negotiated.

Stand tall brothers and sisters, they will be coming after what we have; they will be trying to take away all that we have worked so hard for.

So stand tall, be thankful for what you got and stop worrying about the small things. Our jobs are on the line; our lives are on the line.

May the New Year bring Joy, Happiness and Clarity. I'm thankful for what I got! Peace!

In Solidarity

Joe Conzo
Vice President



Newsworthy events can be called in or e-mailed to the following news media:

News Desk

Channel 2: 1-800-242-6397

Channel 4: 1-212-664-2731

Channel 5: 1-212-452-3808

Channel 7: 1-212-456-3173

Channel 9: newsdesk@wwortv.com

Channel 11: 1-212-210-2411

The New York Post: 1-212-930-8500

The New York Daily News: 1-212-210-NEWS

The New York Times: news-tips@nytimes.com

FINANCIAL INSTABILITY



BY DONALD FAETH, *Secretary-Treasurer*

The City just offered DC-37 a contract where they would receive three years of 0% raises and the honor of paying 10% more towards their health insurance. State workers just settled a similar contract after they were threatened with massive layoffs.

Ironically, this 'carrot or the stick' offer was made by the same politicians who are vowing to revitalize the economy by creating jobs.

Meanwhile, oil, gas, food, consumer goods, insurance, etc., have all steadily continued to rise in cost. Couple these developments with a low, middle-class, fixed salary and what you produce is stress, anxiety and a sense of overwhelming pressure that only continues to get worse. Society is hurting; high unemployment rates, foreclosures, corporations moving overseas, and entire countries filing for bankruptcy. Demonstrations and protests are occurring in the streets... and many of our own members, working full-time and then some are suffering. The rich are getting richer and the rest of us are getting poorer. The parable of the hard working ant and the lazy grasshopper doesn't apply here. People are working hard, but find themselves unable to get out from under their continually growing debt.

We do a job where helping others is our main focus, but we need to also take care of our families and ourselves. The City is not going to give us a raise anytime soon, and you and I cannot control the economy, however, we can control some of the expenses that we incur that adversely affect our ability to pay our monthly mandatory expenses.

First, sit down with a pen and piece of paper and analyze your situation. Simple math; add up your net sources of income for the month, than subtract your obligations. If your number is still positive, great, use it to establish a budget for what you can spend extra every month after putting a portion into a savings fund. If your result is a negative number, then this is a wake-up call. **DO NOT IGNORE IT!** It is time to self-evaluate, triage the importance of what you deem to be necessary expenditures and understand that certain things may need to be sacrificed.

Necessary expenditures are usually fixed; rent/mortgage, car/mass transit payment, insurance, taxes, gas/electric, food... hey wait a minute. Back up one or two.

Do you really need the hostess cakes, ice cream, soda, etc.? Can you take shorter showers, lower the heat at night or when you're at work? Do you smoke and/or enjoy that glass of wine at dinner every night? These become habits, but they are also considered luxuries that will save you a lot of money if you can manage to do without them. If you worked a different borough, would you still pay a toll?

Can you bring food and drinks to work? The same bottle of water I spend \$1.50 on at the deli, I can get for 25 cents at BJ's/Costco when I purchase a case.

Don't believe the hype, you really don't need premium fuel for your car to 'drive your engine clean.' Stop yourself before using a vending machine or paying \$8 for a drink in a bar.

Do you really need that many cable channels? Do you need a car to impress other people or to get you from point A to point B?

No, I'm not telling you how to live your life. To the contrary; only you can decide what is really important to you.

But if you step back for a moment and take a hard look at your circumstances and your routine, you may find that your quality of life would be better off with less 'stuff,' contrary to what the advertisers want you to believe. We would all love to be able to spend money freely, without any worries, but that is not a reality for most of us, the 99%.

Credit cards, the 800 pound gorilla in the room. Did the bastards jack up your interest rates when the government attempted to regulate them? Are you paying just the interest and little or no principle?

If you are paying more than 12% on any of them, close the account and attempt to negotiate a zero or low interest payment plan with the cards' bank due to financial hardship. If they refuse to renegotiate, then just stop paying them. This gets their attention. They will hit you with late fees and it will hurt your credit score in the short term, but they will cave. Filing for bankruptcy can hurt you for many years, but debt management companies like 'Greenpath' can often be successful in lowering all your interest rates for a small fee as long as you agree to pay off the principles with an automatic monthly deduction. Other companies claim to negotiate a lower principle, but this comes at a heavy risk while the banks take court actions against you and your credit score tanks. There are many options, so just do a little research first before signing anything.

We have become a society and a culture built on debt. Our own government is printing money that is no longer backed by gold. Banks offer low interest rates for people with money, but jack them up for those who don't. We take out pension loans to pay off other loans and subsidize daily expenditures, but now your take home pay is less because of the pension loan. Getting dizzy yet?

Bottom line, every action has a reaction. It is okay and I think important to every so often treat yourself, but you need to keep focused on seeking financial freedom. Just remember, it probably won't come from a lottery ticket. You are actually going to have to work at it and sacrifice a little, but in the end, it will be worth it.

In Solidarity

Donald Faeth
Secretary-Treasurer

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

BY OREN BARZILAY, *Recording-Secretary*

There are many misconceptions about the law related to pregnancy in the EMS workplace. Seemingly well-intended managers may get in trouble when they remove a pregnant employee from field duty simply because she's pregnant. They may feel there could be "liability" if something happens to the mother or unborn child while lifting a patient.

Those are biased, outdated notions that are a smack in the face to the law.

The general rule with pregnancy in the EMS workplace is that it should be treated like any other temporary disability.

The key questions to consider, center on whether the pregnant employee can perform the essential functions of the job and whether she can meet the basic physical requirements.

The pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA) of 1978, as well as state anti-discrimination laws where the PDA doesn't provide coverage, sets forth some fundamental principles that must be followed:

It's illegal for an EMS employer to choose not to hire a woman who is pregnant due to her pregnancy or condition for related to pregnancy, or based on any prejudice from co-workers, customers or potential clients.

Tip: never ask a woman in a job interview if she's pregnant, or if she intends to have children. That should not be a factor in personnel decisions, such as hiring or promoting.

An employer can't determine the work capability of an employee based on conditions related to pregnancy.

Tip: don't tell a pregnant provider she can't work because of potential harm to the unborn child, "exposure" to hazardous conditions or potential for pregnancy complications.

Employers do have the right to request a doctor's statement before granting a sick leave.

So you can generally require medical verification that the pregnant staff member can perform the essential functions of the job if there's an indication that she can't do so—as long as this procedure is applied equally to all employees who exhibit physical limitations when performing their work.

Employees who are unable to work temporarily due to pregnancy or conditions related to pregnancy must be treated in the same manner as other employees who are disabled temporarily.

Tip: treat pregnant employees no differently than you would someone with a back problem.

The question in both cases should be: Can this person meet the physical requirement of the job?

Employers must permit the pregnant employee to do her job for as long as she's capable of performing it. No set time periods exist for how long a pregnant employee should be permitted to work.

Many pregnant EMS field providers are able to function in the field throughout pregnancy, and in some cases, right up until their delivery date.

Tip: don't establish a blanket rule that says pregnant employees can't work in the field during the last weeks or last trimester of pregnancy.

Only take actions if objective indications that the employee can't meet the physical requirement of the job are present.

When an employee goes on leave due to pregnancy, an employer must keep their job open for the same period of time that jobs are kept open for staff members who are on disability or sick leave. Federal and state laws, such as the family and medical leave act, may provide added unpaid leave benefits for childbirth, as well as for the parent to care for a newborn child.

Tip: ensure you have a clear policy on medical or disability leaves and that pregnancy or "maternity" leave, is treated the same as any other leave under that policy. Know the law on unpaid and paid leaves in our department.

In today's society, women have become a much greater presence in EMS.

Administration as well as staff, must avoid any bias or traditional notions regarding what a woman should be allowed to do while pregnant and working.

Unless there are objective indications the pregnant employee isn't physically capable of performing her job function, that choice should generally be left up to her and her doctor.

Source: Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Facts of pregnancy discrimination.

Brothers and Sisters, I want to thank you all for your support, wish you a happy and healthy new year.

In solidarity

Oren Barzilay
Recording-Secretary



**Special Thanks To All Those
Who Donated Items To The
Holiday Food Drive of Local 2507**

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT COMMITTEE

BY JOHN MCGUIRE, *Executive Board Member*

For the past four months, I have been actively involved with the medical equipment committee. The committee is focused on coming up with the best solutions for patient care and ease of use for EMTs and Paramedics.

There is a great deal of consideration given to the new products that are implemented. We keep your best interest in mind when finding solutions to improve patient care.

The following are the most recent developments:

- Sealable emesis bags will replace the existing emesis basin-making disposal and clean up easier.

As the emesis basins are used, they will be replaced by the new bags.

- The stair chair will continue to be manufactured by the current company, but the committee is still looking for an alternative for the future. For those of you who have field tested the Stryker and Ferno stair chairs, please ensure that you have completed and submitted your evaluations. Each evaluation is reviewed and discussed by the committee and is a valuable part of the selection process.

- A redesigned ALS medical bag is in the works. The new bag will be more ergonomically designed with injury preven-

tion in mind.

The goal is for the bag to be easier and more comfortable to carry, distributing the weight equally among partners, while remaining durable and functional.

The committee will also be looking into a new BLS medical bag as well.

- The new narcotics pouches have been field tested, revisions have been made, and an order has been placed with Iron Duck. We should start to see the new pouches come into service over the next few months.

If anyone has any new ideas or has seen a product that they would like the committee to consider, please reach out to me via the union office and I will bring your suggestions to the committee for discussion and evaluation.

Be Safe, Be Well

John McGuire

Executive Board Member



IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!

BY WILLIAM RUSH, *Executive Board Member*

A couple of weeks ago while picking up personnel at another station I observed a person of rank addressing a new MOS. This person was giving erroneous info about a department policy.

When I inquired about the situation this person knowing who I was, told me to “mind my own business.”

When I told him what my business was and why I was there, he backed down recanted his interpretation of department policy.

I’ve come across this scenario before and what bothers me most was that other personnel, senior personnel stood by and did nothing.

They wouldn’t write statements.

Luckily the station Captain was more than willing to address the problem. It meant a lot to that MOS that someone stood up for him.

It didn’t go unnoticed that other people didn’t help him, which makes us divided.

I believe for us to move forward as a service we need to take care of each other, but most of all, respect one another.

Remember the saying “United We Stand, Divided We Fall.” I say “United We Stand, Divided We Fail.”

William Rush

Executive Board Member



Visit us online at
www.local2507.com

IT'S YOUR UNION!

BY GEORGE BURBANO, *Executive Board Member*

This job is still very young and its current membership is representative of not only how young the job is but how young its people are.

I certainly wouldn't have thought that there would be a time when I would have a son on this job, but that time came earlier this year.

This seems to be more common now-a-days as quite a few of us "older" people have children or other relatives on this job.

With its young membership, comes some concerns not only for the future of this job as a profession but for the future of these young members themselves:

Will these young people stay? Can we afford to keep them and/or lose them? I've heard it before, I said it myself at one or more times early in my career. "I'm only here for a few years."

Something happened a few years later, I actually began to love this job and dedicate myself not only to the job but to the people on this job.

So here I find myself almost 25 yrs later, with a son on this job.

I'm still here, and still doing the job I started in 87, and now-a-days still dedicated to serving you, the other people on this job.

The Union, signifies many things. It stands for many things. Some of these things we agree, some we don't. Either way, at its very basic foundation, the solid block that its formed upon, is the fact that we stand "together" for a common goal.

The Union isn't made up of the President, its officers, its board, delegates and trustees. The Union is made up of the people that the officers serve. We serve the membership! If ever the officers do not strive to serve its members, then the Union is lost.

More importantly the members of the Union need to stay informed, participate in their own futures, and help its officers strive to serve them.

Ask yourself this question: "When have I attended a union meeting?" For many the answer is: "NEVER."

Well, if ever you should attend a Union Meeting, its at times like the present.

More than ever, the future of this job and its union is in question. Movements like those in Wisconsin, Ohio and other areas, are there to limit if not eliminate the function of unions.

Some think Unions are not necessary. The government already protects workers. The Native Americans thought the government would take care of them too.

Well, we were just reminded of how the government is willing to take care of its workers, when after many years of fighting and 1 large lawsuit, the City finally stopped forcing employees to work for free. In today's world, a modern society, it was

thought that it would be ok for some people mostly new hires to work for free. Remember Heat Days.

So think about what it is you want from this job. If its going to another job, then you are wasting skills you learned here. But It's understandable and acceptable.

After all, we all have families or want to have families that we will need to support.

We still have a long way to go to be equally recognized and equally compensated in comparison to our other fellow Emergency Workers.

We need to keep the skilled people here. We need people to come to meetings, and ask questions, make suggestions, look at whats going on around you and participate not only in your own future but that of those that will come after you.

EMS is the fastest growing and most "In-Demand" service not only nationwide but worldwide.

Sickness, Accidents, Natural Disasters and Terrorism, all need not only a police force and a fire fighting force, but someone has to take care of the victims, treat them and get them to the hospital.

Someone takes care of the firefighter down, or the police officer shot.

EMS is not only growing within itself, but as one of the newest agencies in any corner of the world,

EMS brings with it the latest in technology, equipment, training, communications, logistics and operations, changing the olden ideas left in our sister agencies.

Any agency that takes on EMS, is no longer that agency. It is a new agency where clearly its original defined goal has become secondary to the greatest needed agency in the world today: EMS!

A Police Department that runs EMS, while few have become a primary EMS agency that still fights crime but spends most of its time providing EMS.

Fire Agencies throughout the country and world, that once had a defined primary fire fighting force, now have a defined EMS force, that occasionally fights fires. This isn't bad, its the product of excellent firefighting capability, advances in fire protection and building materials, as well as standards in building codes.

A unified force, with a common goal, and a showing to support that common goal, is what makes up a union.

It won't hurt anyone to come to Union Meetings at least a couple of times per year. Participate in your own future and that of the most in-demand service of all time.

It's an hour of your time, to improve your time here.

In Solidarity

George Burbano, Paramedic
Executive Board Member

CITY OF NEW YORK

PROPOSALS FOR COUNCILWIDE BARGAINING

First Session
November 10, 2011

Item

1. Term of Agreement: Five (5) Years
2. Wage Increases: 0%/0%/0%/2%/2%; no increase in additions to gross
3. Eliminate any and all prohibitions against “rescheduling” and any attendant penalties in any unit agreement.
4. Eliminate any “reverse out-of-title” provisions.
5. Eliminate any and all references to selection of employees based on seniority, and/or any and all restrictions on assignments based on transfer procedures in any unit agreement.
6. Increase Administrative Charges for Union Dues.
7. Modify pension requirements for New Hires to include extended service requirements and increased employee contributions.
8. Implement Employee Contributions (10% Co-premiums for Actives and Retirees) for Basic Health Insurance; implement HIP co-pays and increase deductibles.
9. A. Reduce Welfare Fund Contributions by \$100 on a rate basis; B. Raise part-time threshold to 20 hours/week
10. Administrative expenses incurred by the Welfare Fund shall not exceed 7.5% of the annual contributions.
11. Welfare fund reserves that exceed one (1) year’s contributions must be used to provide additional benefits.
12. Convert all Leave With Pay to LWOP.

DISTRICT COUNCIL 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO 2010 COUNCIL-WIDE BARGAINING DEMANDS

GENERAL ECONOMIC

1. There shall be three (3) year agreement.
2. A fair, reasonable and liveable wage increase effective the first day of each year of the agreement.
3. The reduced hiring rate shall be eliminated.
4. The benefit modifications for new hires shall be restored.
5. A recurring annuity payment.
6. Mileage and meal allowances shall be increased.

JOB SECURITY

7. No layoffs during term of this agreement.

HEALTH & WELFARE

8. Increase the welfare fund contribution rate for actives and retirees.

All terms and provisions of the current agreement shall continue unless modified in these negotiations.

The union reserves the right to add or amend proposals until such time as a final agreement is reached.

The City of New York reserves the right to add to, delete, modify, and/or reinstate any of these proposals until such time as final agreement is reached.

IT IS NOT ALWAYS WHAT YOU THINK IT IS

BY ELLIS OLIVE, *Executive Board Member*

First let me wish you and your family a very happy and healthy new year. I have seen that we have lost our way in the streets. What I mean by this statement is that we are not using what we have learned, which is scene safety. Sizing up what has been happening when you arrive on the scene of the assignment. Occasionally we are not focused on the call that we are responding to. It is of great importance to our safety that we review the text of the call so that we are prepared for the size up that is needed when we arrive on the scene of the assignment. For example a patient who is emotionally stressed and you are not focused and approach the patient in the wrong manner may trigger a negative reaction from the patient. Another example is that you didn't put on your gloves because you felt you didn't need them and then you walk into the apartment and there is a patient

who has been stabbed or shot and you need to act quickly to stabilize your patient. Last example, you walk up six flights of stairs and forgot your chair, now the patient is not a one year old with a cough; it's a ninety one year old patient with chest pain.

All I am saying is perform your job to the best of your ability, from the time you receive your first call until the time you receive your last. We are professionals and need to look and act the part. The perception that a patient sees as we perform our patient care to the level of our training, and the views of those that surround us as we perform our skills is highly important. The satisfaction is also of self accomplishment.

In Solidarity

Ellis Olive
Executive Board Member

