

Get the Latest Local 876 Union News and Updates



Join the Member Info Network



@ www.ufcw876.org

By signing on with the Local 876 Member Info Network, stewards and rank and file members receive the latest news and updates from Local 876 electronically delivered to their computer via email.

Members can sign up for the Info Network on the Local 876 website: www.ufcw876.org by clicking on the Member Info Network logo located on the right hand column of the home-page. The linked submittal form allows members to pick the categories of updates they want to receive from the local.

Member Info Network participants are the first to learn of important contract updates, union events, and programs of interest to them.

Local 876 encourages all stewards to sign-up as Info Network members to insure they receive accurate and timely information regarding contract negotiations.

Local 876 urges stewards to share the information included in the "Help Spread the Word" feature with the union members at their workplace.



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UFCW 876 STEWARD EDITION

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Local Looking for High Response Rate, Honest Responses

Time for Action: Kroger Bargaining Surveys Mailed

Local 876 Kroger stewards can help insure their union enters its upcoming Kroger contract negotiations from a position of strength by securing sincere membership participation in the Kroger Contract survey.

"Knowledge is power, and if the union knows members' bargaining goals and how strongly they will fight to achieve these goals, we will enter contract negotiations from a position of power," Roger Robinson, Local 876's president said. "We need all members to thoughtfully and honestly complete the survey, because all of the local's actions at the bargaining table will be based on its results."

While the local has conducted surveys in the past, the economic downturn has increased the survey's importance on 2010 bargaining.

"In the past, since we had a pretty good idea of where members were at, the survey results were fairly predictable," Robinson said. "Today, it's impossible to predict members' response to the survey. After weathering the economic storm of the past year, and facing an uncertain economy, we need members to tell us honestly and specifically, what they need from their next contract and how hard they

will fight to achieve their bargaining goals. Over the course of negotiations, we are going to make many important decisions based on the survey results. We need members to give honest answers to the survey's questions to insure our actions accurately reflect the membership's desires."

The post office has notified Local

876 that the surveys have been mailed and will arrive at members' homes between February 1 and 19. The surveys will arrive in an envelope with the message "Important: Contract Bargaining Survey Enclosed. Return by March 10, 2010 to Have a Voice in Your Negotiations and Enter \$10,000 Savings Bonds Drawing."

Quick Facts: Local 876 2010 Kroger Contract Bargaining Survey

This survey is being conducted instead of bargaining questionnaires or proposal meetings -- *completing the survey is the most effective way for members to have a voice in their contract negotiations.*

Local 876 will use the survey results to establish bargaining goals and evaluate company proposals -- *members need to be honest in their survey responses to make sure Local 876 actions reflect their desires.*

Surveys are being distributed by mail only -- *additional or replacement copies are unavailable.*

Surveys will arrive at member's homes between February 1 and 19 -- *members who live near one another should receive their surveys at the same time.*

The Local 876 survey is different from Kroger's survey(s) -- *members who took a company survey should also complete the union's survey.*

The survey is being conducted by researchers at Wayne State University -- *no one at Local 876 will ever know how individual members respond to the survey.*

Members who return the survey by March 10, 2010 will be entered into a \$10,000 Savings Bonds Drawing -- *this survey is so important Local 876 is offering large cash incentives for membership participation.*

Local 876 Retirement Services & Financial Wellness Center Expands Membership Offerings

To help members through these difficult and uncertain economic times, the Local 876 Retirement Services and Financial Wellness Center has expanded the opportunities it provides Local 876 members to make sound financial decisions that maximize the quality of their lifestyle now and in the future.

"We are always looking for ways to increase the value of Local 876 membership," Roger Robinson, Local 876's president said. "Offering more programs through our Retirement Services and Financial Wellness Center and increasing the convenience for member to access these services made sense, especially as the economy continues to pose new and increasing challenges."

Representatives from the Retirement Services and Center will make it more convenient for members to attend their free retirement planning workshops by offering the sessions at additional locations.

Reduced rate tax filing assistance will also be offered to members through the center. See the sidebars on this page for more information on these membership programs.

Pushing Your Money to Work Harder

Get Control of Your 401(k)
Get Your Numbers
Don't Leave Your Retirement to Chance



Two-Part Retirement Workshop*

Thursdays, February 25 and March 4 -- Madison Heights

Tuesdays, March 23 and March 30 -- Waterford

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

- .. Learn how your pension works and update your pension credits.
- .. Review 401(k) strategies and IRA rollover options at retirement.
- .. Build a retirement income and spending plan.
- .. Ask the experts questions regarding pension, social security, health insurance, investments, 401(k)s, estate planning, long term care, etc.

To Register or For More Information
Call 1-800-321-6406 ext. 8645

Look for Future Workshops in Flint, Clinton Township & Ann Arbor

**Pre-registration required, workshops may be cancelled due to low registration.*

Preparation for Contract Bargaining Begins Now

Achieving the best possible outcome to contract negotiations requires a great deal of preparation by both the local union and individual members.

"Being successful at the bargaining table entails much more than the local union doing it's homework," Roger Robinson, Local 876's president, said. "It requires active participation in the process and preparation on several levels by the membership involved, especially stewards."

The local and members look to stewards to play a heightened role in negotiations and to set an example for other members to follow.

In addition to serving as a vital communication link between the union and the membership regarding negotiations, the local counts on stewards to closely monitor their work environment during the months leading up to formal bargaining.

"We need stewards to immediately report any operational changes to their union representative," Robinson said. "This could include changes in vendors, inventory, or job assignments, anything that is out of the ordinary."

Robinson cautions stewards to pay careful attention to weekly work schedules and warn members to take immediate action if their hours are improperly cut.

"Employers like to reduce hours as bargaining approaches so they can say business is slow," Robinson said.

"Members need to protect themselves from having this bargaining strategy cause them to suffer a reduction from full-time to part-time status. Stewards need to be vigilant and help members maximize their seniority rights and protect their full-time status."

Preparing for contact bargaining also requires members to be mentally and financially prepared for any challenge the negotiations may bring. Stewards can help members with these preparations by talking about what to expect from their employer.

"Stewards need to warn members to expect their employer to talk about freezes, cuts, the masses of unemployed workers ready to take their jobs, and to spread rumors about what the members and union are willing to 'give up' at the bargaining table," Robinson said. "Members need to understand these and similar messages are simply part of typical company bargaining strategy, aimed at wearing members down mentally so they will accept less."

Stewards can also help members lessen the anxiety of contact negotiations by encouraging them to take steps to get their financial house in order and telling them how they themselves are working to be financially prepared for any circumstances that may arise during negotiations.

"Members, especially those who may be going through negotiations for the first time, need to understand the union isn't urging them to get their financial house in order to scare them, but to help them achieve the best contract possible," Robinson said. "Being financially responsible today will enable members to stand strong and fight for their contract goals."

The list accompanying this article details specific ways stewards and members can prepare for contract bargaining and insure they leave negotiations with the best possible contract.

Get Ready for Contract Bargaining

Have a voice in your negotiations. Complete any bargaining surveys or questionnaires sent to you by Local 876. Attend any contract meetings held by your union.

Report any changes in the way your employer does business to your union representative.

Make sure you receive important communications from Local 876 regarding negotiations by updating your address, telephone number, and email address with the union.

Make sure members maximize their scheduling rights to protect their full-time status and receive as many hours as possible.

Expect employers to spread rumors and use scare tactics to intimidate and wear members down mentally.

Get your financial house in order. Keep track of expenses, save a little extra each week, keep bills at a low level, make doctor appointments before contract time to avoid extra expenses, and delay big purchases until after contract ratification.

Explain to your family why the budget is tighter, and the potential challenges of your contract talks.

Talk to members, especially newer members about how to prepare for bargaining.

Discounted Tax Preparation Offered to Members

The Local 876 Retirement Services and Financial Wellness Center is offering Local 876 members the following reduced-rate* tax preparation and filing services for their 2009 taxes.

\$129 -- 1040 Federal & State: Includes limited Schedule A itemized deductions & limited Schedule B interest and dividends, preparation for tax return of child living with parent(s), and electronic filing.

\$65 -- 1040A Individual Federal & State: Includes electronic filing.

\$50 -- 1040EZ Federal & State: For single or joint (no dependents), includes electronic filing.

Call 1-800-321-6406 ext. 8604 for More Information

Members may benefit from several changes to the tax law including: make work pay credit, earned income tax changes, first time home-buyer credit, new vehicle deduction, education incentives, child tax credit changes, unemployment benefits exclusion, and energy tax incentives.

**Minimum rates quoted, additional fees charged for added*

