

RETIREE NOTES

Retirees ready to fight after Janus decision

ON JUNE 27, THE U.S. Supreme Court sided against working people and ruled that fair share fees are unconstitutional. Public sector unions can no longer collect reduced fees from bargaining unit employees who don't wish to pay them, but must continue to represent them as full members.

"The Janus case is an attempt to take away the power of the union and the voice of the people," said Don Todd, Sub-Chapter 86 President (Springfield). "But I was around before fair share. I know if we stand together what amazing things we can get done."

AFSCME members are standing strong, more determined than ever to protect workers' rights and improve the futures of their families and communities. They will need the help of retirees who have been through similar challenges.

"Retirees set the path for everything current working members have," said Jay Ferraro, Sub-chapter 69 President (Rockford). "None of our contracts were simply given to us. We had to fight for everything. We didn't have rights before collective bargaining but we are still here. Now more than ever we need to stand together."

You can get involved in the fight for our union by contacting your sub-chapter president to help with member education and outreach.

"There is a lot at stake," said Todd, "and our best



AFSCME Retirees Chapter 31 Executive Board Member Melissa Garman wins award.

defense is standing in solidarity."

Retiree honored at Mother Jones Dinner

AFSCME RETIREES CHAPTER 31 State Executive Board member Melissa "Missy" Garman won the Marge Jindrich Award for Union Leadership at DeKalb County's Second Annual Mother Jones Dinner.

"It was an honor to receive this award," Garman said. "To be honest, it was uncomfortable to be rewarded for something that is in my heart and soul."

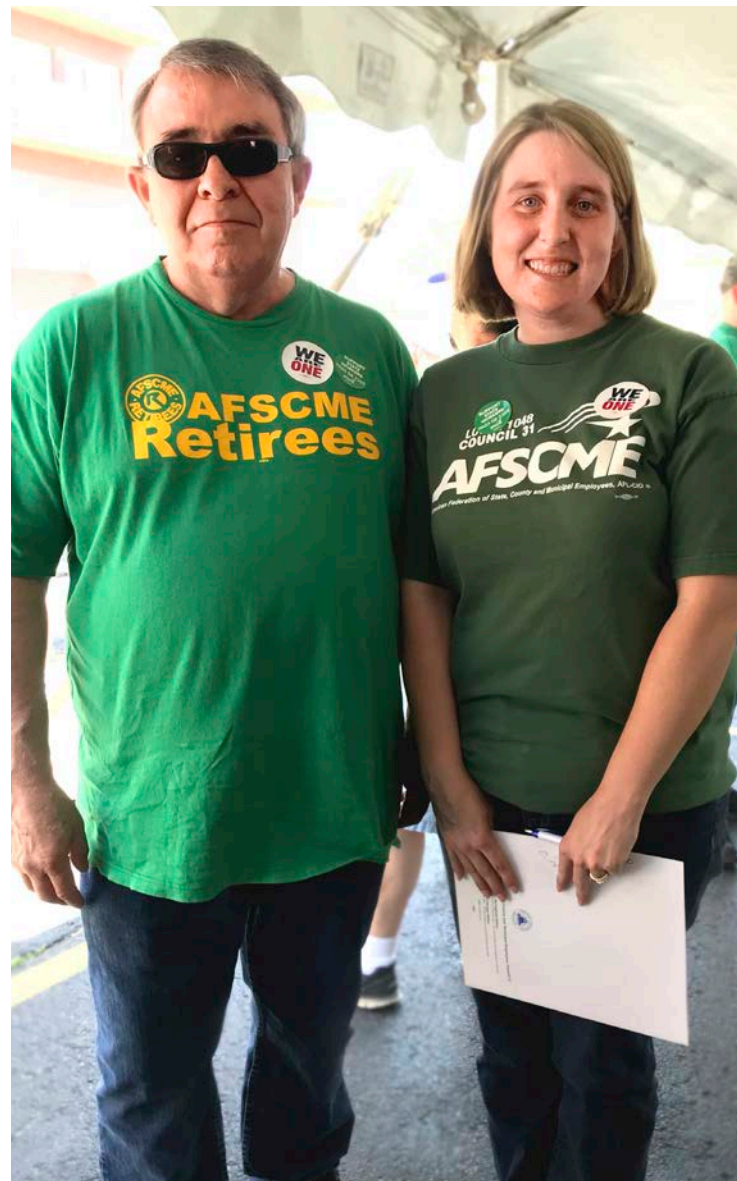
Marge Jindrich was a union organizer in Saint Charles and the first woman elected president of her union. The Marge Jindrich award recipient must be a fierce union advocate who fights for the progress of the labor movement.

Garman was born and raised in Chicago, a proud product of Chicago public schools, and attended Northern Illinois University to study political science. After graduation, she eventually settled in DeKalb and began her 32-year career as a child abuse investigator with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

Early in her state career, Garman became active in AFSCME Local 448, and after retiring, she stayed involved as a member of the Chapter 31 executive board.

Garman said the labor movement is in her veins: She carried her grandfather Sam's eulogy in her pocket when she received the award.

"Sam embodied all of the qualities of a strong union member," Garman said. "He was the president of the Chicago Fur Workers Union in the 1950s and devoted his life to the labor movement and the common man. He fought



Sub-chapter 90 member Tod Vincent and his daughter, Local 3280 member Natalie Stanley.

against discrimination of all minorities. I am a part of a strong lineage of activists. Winning this award is an honor."

Solidarity for my daughter

ON MAY 10, MORE THAN 1,000 AFSCME members marched to the Capitol to call on legislators to finally pay one of the state's oldest debts. Chapter 31 retirees were there to march with them.

In July 2011, the state failed to pay negotiated wage increases to more than 20,000 employees. The Illinois Supreme Court ruled that the funds must be paid, but required a special appropriation passed by the General Assembly. Gov. Rauner vetoed a bill with the required appropriation in 2016.

But finally in this 2018 legislative session, not only was a back pay bill passed by both houses, but an appropriation for all the wages owed was included in the 2019 budget.

Retirees attending the May Lobby Day either had back pay owed to them or were standing in solidarity with others owed

money. Sub-chapter 90 member Todd Vincent drove more than three hours from Anna, Illinois, to support his daughter Natalie Stanley, a Local 3280 member affected by unpaid wages.

"I believe that I should stand in solidarity with my daughter," Vincent said. "She wants to strengthen her union and make sure that everyone gets paid fair wages. That is something that I fought for before we had a contract. We know the importance of standing together. We are a union family through and through."

"It means a lot to me that my dad was by my side," Natalie Stanley said. "He really knows what it means to be in the union and how hard we fight for our workplace rights. In the future, when I retire, I will sign up to be an AFSCME retiree so I can continue to fight for everything that the union does and continues to do for working members and retirees."

"The union is its members and we have to take care of each other, regardless if we are retired or working," Vincent said. "We all have to be union strong, no matter the issue."



At the Back Pay Lobby Day (L-R): Dave Spinner, Steve McLaughlin and Eric Kennedy of Sub-chapter 87 with John Tilden (Sub-chapter 66).