

Over the last few years, the MCO Executive Board has been planning a path to restructure MCO to better serve all members, which we're calling Tomorrow's Union Today. The Board and staff met with two outside facilitators to help us craft this vision. The Executive Board has also led listening tours to better understand what the membership is thinking and to understand the expectations of union members.

MCO's Central Committee is the highest tribunal in MCO's structure, and Central delegates have shown overwhelming support of the actions taken by Board members and staff in order to start a different kind of conversation with our members and better meet their needs.

The final touches are being put on the MCO blue print of the future and a new bold action plan to better use union resources and serve members. The plan will be rolled out very soon. The initiatives in the cover story are just a piece of it.

MCO is doing our part to help out with the water crisis in Flint. We sent a semi-truck full of water and volunteers to distribute water to about 50 corrections officers and their families living in the city. Please keep our brothers and sisters in Flint and others affected by this public health crisis in your thoughts and prayers.

MCO is in the process of joining the Michigan Association of Police Organizations, also known as MAPO. During the listening tours, members told the Board they don't feel like a valued part of the law enforcement community. We are trying to change that. Leaders have also been discussing other possible partnerships with law enforcement personnel. Joining forces with MAPO would have several benefits, but one that percolates to the top is eligibility for COPS Trust, a special health insurance plan which MCO proposed in the last bargaining cycle. While there are other obstacles to overcome, this is one step we can take in securing better health care for corrections officers. Stay tuned for more information.

In just a few months, we will be back at the bargaining table on wages and health care. The Executive Board has already begun preparing. We have had meetings and conversations with our international union, SEIU, on bargaining. They sent a health care expert to meet with us and explore different strategies and avenues on bargaining health care.

In my recent tours there have been several questions about when a hard copy of the contract will be printed and distributed. We are proofreading the contract now. We literally have to proofread every line of the entire collective bargaining agreement before we send it off to the printer. Last time a contract was ratified, members received hard copies in June.

MCO will once again have an official presence at the Employee Awards Banquet in May. We will honor all facility officers of the year for their hard work.

I would like to remind the chapter officials we are gearing up for basic steward training and advanced arbitration training for those who did not receive it in December. Chapter presidents, please get a list of union officials who need the basic training to your labor representative ASAP. Chapter leaders will be notified in writing when and where the next advanced arbitration training will be held.

For many years MCO has advocated for new employee schools at WHV. MDOC is holding a special academy just for WHV, which started in February. We applaud Director Heidi Washington for paying attention to WHV's unique needs.

I encourage all members to join our Facebook group and tell us what is going on at your facility. Please stop by the MCO website, mco-seiu.org, frequently. Don't forget about our online store at co-store.com/mco. Be safe.

Tom

## MDOC EMPLOYEES SUPPORT THEIR COMMUNITIES THROUGH HOLIDAY GIVING

Corrections staff around the state open up their hearts, schedules, and wallets every holiday season to give something back to those less fortunate than them.

## • Cotton employees "adopted" 60 Angel Tree children.

Many of the kids are living at a domestic violence or homeless shelter. Cotton staff donated pillows, hats, gloves, coats, boots, scarves, and other gifts.

They gave the Aware Domestic Violence Shelter 850, raised at a 50/50raffle, plus pillows, hats, and gloves.

JCF staff donated 20 hams, pillows, blankets and gifts for 20 kids to the Jackson Interfaith Homeless Shelter.

At the McCollough Academy, in a low-income area in Jackson, students received holiday packages brimming with school supplies donated by JCF staff.

## • Oaks officers took Manistee County kids shopping at Meijer Dec. 15.

Manistee County Shop With a Cop gives kids a \$100 gift card to buy presents for family and a little something for themselves. Volunteers help wrap the goodies. Shopping money is raised from local businesses and a golf outing in the spring.

ECF Officer Mathew McShane started Manistee Shop with a Cop in 2006.

• DRF employees adopted six families - 20 kids in total - in their Adopt-A-Family Christmas Project.

Don't forget — take advantage of scholarships and the MCO store!

Scholarship applications for the 2016-2017 academic year are now on the MCO website.

MCO offers scholarships for children of active members. The union will award 20 scholarships worth \$750 each.

Applications must be postmarked by June 1. More information and applications are online at mco-seiu.org. Good luck!

MCO's online store. com/mco.

communities.

# RETIREMENTS

Gary Aho Dorothy Allen Jeff Armbrustmacher Matthew Barrett Timothy Beckers Scott Bickman John Blankinship Terry Boatright Haldane Carris Mark Clemens Terri Coello Jerry Compton Linden Cook Ross Cook John Craig Curtis Crawford Sherry Curenton John Dahlbacka Jennifer Davis Ethel Dixon John Doran Stanley Dorn Pamela Drew Douglas Elliot Jeffery Fields Mark Fleming Kathleen Foster Timothy Fuester Eugene George Frank Gill Wynda Glover Darryl Goetz Charles Gordon JamesHall Jeffery Hanson Jim Hargrave

Joseph Hemenway Michelle Hoey Jeffrey Hooker *LeroyHotchkiss* Dennis Johns RaderJohnson Edward Juranek Mark Kalanquin Daniel Keiper Dennis Keith Tim Kositzky Edward Lajoie *Adam Lamay* Lynn Lockhart-Smith KevinLoveberry Scott Luna Orlinda Mallett-Godwin Suzanne Marquedant Robert Mattern Matt Maurer DavidMay Patrick Maynard Cheri McKechnie Todd Meadows William Merrow Jimmie Mickel Patrick Miller Todd Mills Darla Minard Andrew Moore Leslee Moore **Donald Morris** JamesMulnix Samuel Olivo John Oseguera Timothy Palomaki

Timothy Pea Yolanda Perkins Michael Perron Falicia Peterson-Chaney Scott Pline Mark Potter Dennis Ries Michael Rizzio Jerry Rudden Shawn Sadler John Sahl RobinSanders Walter Schultz Deborah Scott DavidShearer Thomas Shilling Kurt Simon Lawrence Smeltzer Paul Stanolis Mark Stimpson Victoria Strauss Cheryl Sullivan Marvin Sullivan Tammy Tortorelli Thomas Toth Michael Verduzco Jack Verellen Ronald Verthein Tab Waterman Richard Weaver Gary Williams Edward Wilson Laurie Wittenbach William Wrobel Ronald Zerbst





Clockwise from left: Items donated by Cotton staff. Val Lashley, JCF Employees Club reasurer; Angelita Velasco Gunn, xecutive Director of Aware Domesc Violence Shelter: Shane Haney. CF Employees Club President and ACO Member; Shawn Brewer, Warden, JCF. NCC employees who participated n the Livingston County Shop with a Cop. Courtesy photos.





Staff donated money for the chil-

dren's presents and household items for the adults, including laundry detergent, soap, toothpaste and shampoo.

• Eight Woodland officers shopped with kids as part of the Livingston County Shop with A Cop Dec. 5.

Thanks, officers, for your commitment to improving lives in your

Before you head to big box store or the mall for clothes, check out

It's the only place members can buy MCO shirts, hats, mugs and more. Store merchandise is proudly made in the U.S.A. Visit the store at co-store.

The store is new, so we're asking for feedback. You can send your comments at check out, or email cindy@mco-seiu.org.

> Revenues Amount Membership Dues \$847,492 Non-Member Fees \$10,895 \$1,199 Interest From Affiliates \$2,880 **Total Revenues** \$862,466 Expenses  $\bigcirc$ \$4,717 Arbitration Books, dues and subscriptions \$3,425 arte Collective Bargaining \$16,850 \$3,925 Computer Qu \$32,220 Consulting Contributions \$5,900 nd Depreciation \$17,627 \$40,697 Insurance  $\sim$ \$2,819 Leased Equipment ivitie \$27,438 Legal and Accounting MCO Report \$5,074 \$76,740 Meetings and Conferences of Act Office and Administrative \$9,427 Organizational Unity materials \$509 \$2,574 Organizing tatement Pension Contribution \$42,193 Postage \$3,218 Repairs and Maintenance \$35,756 Salaries \$213,273 Social activities \$20,385 Ś \$20,839 Taxes - Payroll Taxes - Per Capita \$262,202 \$6,515 Telephone \$9,619 Utilities \$863,942 **Total Expenses** Change in Unrestricted Net Assets -\$1,476

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TOMORROW'S UNION NNAY

# **MCO** moves forward on initiatives to engage **MEMBERS AND KEEP OUR UNION STRONG**

MCO leaders, staff and members have been strategizing on how to engage corrections officers on a more personal level to bring more significance and value to their union membership.

We started with three core initiatives – the member listening campaign, a military members' outreach program, and corrections fatigue research and advocacy. The Executive Board announced these initiatives last spring, and the Central committee endorsed them at the May meeting. Since then, the Board and staff have been busy turning these plans into reality. The Board and staff have also created a few more initiatives, based on what we've been hearing from members.

We're calling these initiatives Tomorrow's Union Today. When you see the title Tomorrow's Union Today, you can know staff and the Board are talking about MCO's new initiatives to build member strength and future growth. You'll know the idea behind it is that leaders and staff want to make MCO personally relevant to each member, because we can't afford to focus only on bargaining and grievance processing in the future. Members crave more engagement from their union. MCO leaders and staff want the union to bring more worth to members' work and family lives.

We're working tirelessly to find ways we can be a

officers and their families living in Flint.

The Executive Board will share more details on MCO changes with chapter leaders this month, ahead of the May Central conference.

way

Corrections fatigue (PTSD) research and advocacy For this initiative, MCO partnered with Desert Waters Desert Waters Director Dr. Caterina Spinaris drafted an survey to officers' personal email addresses in November. Spinaris was thrilled with the number of survey com-

Correctional Outreach, a non-profit which specializes in the health and well-being of corrections professionals. in-depth, anonymous assessment to gage MCO member wellness. (You may recognize Spinaris' name-her work has appeared on Corrections.com and CorrectionsOne. com, and she has been cited as a source by The Guardian and The Huffington Post.) MCO staff dispersed the pletions and said they are a good sample of all Michigan

al:opeiu459afl-cio

Photo illustration: These words represent ideas and concerns that came up several times around the state during the MCO Executive Board's Listening Tours last summer and fall. Members opened up to MCO leaders about their home and work lives, and what they would like to see from their union.

# MC@Report

WINTER 2016



resource for corrections officers and their families. For example, last month we delivered water to our corrections

All of this work is important for bringing together members and plugging them in to our union in a fresh

Here's where we stand on Tomorrow's Union Today

STORY CONTINUES

## Cover story cont.

corrections officers. The Desert Waters team is now analyzing the data collected in the survey.

"Many officers know corrections work has taken a toll on their mental well-being and their home life. But we have to have hard data to back up our claims and affect real change, to improve the lives of corrections officers and their families. Without this research, certain groups can continue to deny or waive away our concerns, like they've done for years," said Cary Johnson, the Board's point person on this initiative.

When MCO leaders talk to the media and decision makers, our message carries more weight if we can substantiate our claims. We hope the assessments give us solid footing to argue for more resources for corrections officers. Spinaris and her team will present MCO with the results this spring.

This kind of work is happening around the country. Some states are further along than Michigan, but we are making strides.

## Membership Listening Campaign

The Executive Board met with 157 members at 23 prisons. They were candid about their hopes, fears, and opinions of the union. Many members said their families are number one, and many of their hopes and fears centered on their children's future success - like paying for college and finding a good career with a livable salary. They worry those types of careers are evaporating in our modern economy, where 35 percent of our country's wealth is held by the top one percent of wage earners. (On a global scale, the richest one percent of humans was projected to own 50 percent of the world's money by

sometime this year.) National corporate welfare and the near elimination of Michigan's business taxes, paid for on the backs of regular families, frequently came up.

Needless to say, officers are worried about their own financial security. At the meetings, many said they were unsure if they could ever retire comfortably. Their ability to save for the future has been undercut by rising health care costs and several cuts to their pay, such as the RUO elimination.

Members also said they want more interaction with MCO staff and leaders. They were glad to have the chance to meet Board members faceto-face in a relaxed setting and speak their minds. This feedback is part of the reason MCO leaders and staff are ramping up our communications and looking for more opportunities to interact with members on a personal level.

A disconnect between the needs of younger officers and more seasoned officers also surfaced in the meetings. MCO and staff will investigate ways to add value for the thousands of members who have joined our ranks in the last few years. As COs, we only have each other. We are different ages, from different neighborhoods and different walks of life, but MCO represents all.

Last spring, the Board set a goal to meet with 5 percent of the membership, roughly 325 people, and they'd still like to visit with more members to reach that goal.

## Military Members Outreach

In June, MCO staff put out a clarion call for COs who are active duty or retired service men and women. More than 100 officers answered.

In October, a group of about 30 of them met in Clare to brainstorm ideas to build resources for veterans and active military corrections officers. They came up with a few focus areas for future work. Members decided on those areas after a day of hands-on exercises and in-depth discussion. They shared memories of their service, why they love the U.S.A., and what influenced them to join the military and the Department of Corrections. Many participants said they were grateful for the discipline the military instilled in them.

One of their focus areas was recruitment and retention of military members who join the MDOC. This would build camaraderie between the ranks and possibly even alleviate mandates. As new COs they usually find their footing fast.

Another focus area was identifying a military advocate at every facility. This person would



Board through Tomorrow's Union Today and other big changes at MCO. At left is Andy Potter, MCO's Vice President/Chief of Staff.

ans and active service men and women at the meeting also suggested a mentorship program to engage young COs in the union.

prison.

Veter-

"This unique group has different challenges from Reserve and National Guard issues to VA benefits. That's something we hope to address in this initiative," said Ray Sholtz, the Board's point person on this initiative. "But more importantly, let's celebrate them for all they bring to the table. They all have a strong desire to serve, however they're needed."

This spring, the Board will form a military members' committee. Board members and staff hope to identify and start training mentors as part of this program.

Those are the campaigns the Board set out last spring, but since then, the Board and staff have initiated more programs to step up our advocacy for corrections officers and add more meaning to union membership.

## **Dignity Awareness**

In January, MCO launched a special campaign to increase awareness – and accountability – of corrections officers who are dressed out, targets of sexual abuse by inmates, or falsely accused.

This initiative was sparked during our 2015 member outreach program and after studying both bargaining and State of Michigan survey results. Across the board, MCO members had the following message: Correctional Officers are an important part of the criminal justice system, and our

profession should be treated with the dignity and respect it deserves.

MCO's Legal Affairs Coordinator Jeff Foldie and Director of Governmental and Political Affairs Jeremy Tripp began to outline a plan to improve the MDOC's current process on handling these cases while protecting the dignity of officers targeted in these vile attacks.

In the campaign, MCO has reached out to the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan (PAAM), Michigan State Police (MSP), Office of the Legislative Corrections Ombudsman (LCO), the Governors Office and the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC). Most of them have agreed to partner with us.

Looking ahead, we recognize the hard work and dedication many of these agencies and institutions are already doing on this work but feel the process can be improved dramatically. Obstacles that present a challenge range from: 1) prosecutorial workloads within the counties, 2) inconsistency from facilities in requesting prosecutions, 3) training in evidentiary matters, and 4) prisoner competency.

If you have been dressed out, or have been the target of an inmate's sexual deviance, MCO cares and would like to hear your story. Email mail@ mco-seiu.org or call Communications Director Anita Lloyd at (517)485-3310.

### **Pulse on Corrections**

We're also working to better educate members on national corrections trends and provide deeper context for issues important to our members.

A heightened level of professionalism is expected in our increasing complex jobs, and we know officers are being told to do more with less. Whether we like it or not, technologies like cameras and Tasers are now integral to our workplace. That's why it's important we all stay up to speed on corrections news in our state and around the country.

Here are a few steps we're taking now:

• The MCO website has a new feature: a live feed of top stories from CorrectionsOne.com. Find it at the bottom right of the home page, mcoseiu.org.

• MCO has been in contact with CorrectionsOne, and we plan to republish some of their great content on our website. (See "It's 'correctional officer,' not 'prison guard"' on the MCO website now.)

• We're introducing a new type of publication called the MCO In-Depth. The MCO In-Depth is for MCO or MDOC programs and topics that leaders and staff feel require thorough analysis or background. Staff will prepare and email the MCO In-Depth to our email subscribers. The In-Depth won't be published at set intervals, but whenever it's needed

All of these projects are important for bringing together members and plugging them in to our union in a fresh way.

We want to hear from you. Email mail@mcoseiu.org with your thoughts, questions, or other feedback on Tomorrow's Union Today.

Remember, we're stronger together. Thanks, members, for your loyalty.

## Details on new leadership development program coming in next MCO Report

Looking for a story on the Leadership Development Arbitration Training? Coverage of the training will be in the ext MCO Report. You can also see the Dec. 11 KYI for info on facilities soon. he training.

MCO staff received great feedback on this training. We look forward to offering it to the UP and remaining downstate

The MCO Executive Board is preparing to reand therefore, were unwilling to bargain a longer turn to the bargaining table this summer to negoticontract on wages and health care. ate wages and health care. • In October, MCO and OSE came to a tenta-

Our current contract (for 2016-2018, available now on our website) has provisions that allow MCO and the Office of the State Employer to bargain wages and health care in 2016 and 2017, while freezing all other language in the contract. Here's a recap of what's happened and what

comes next:

wages and health care.

(known as the Cadillac Tax).

hopeful.

recruits, graduated in November. Another class of The Department is continuing to run academies to offset roughly 70 CO retirements every month. roughly 110 was scheduled to begin March 14. MCO leaders and staff meet with all recruits in A class of about 40 recruits started training at WHV in February. Mandates have been out of their first week of training to tell them about the hand at the facility for years, and MCO leaders benefits of union membership.

are hopeful this class will bring the officers some At right: MCO President Tom Tylutki speaks to new recruits at WHV relief. in early February. Photo by Cary Johnson

The Barbara Bouchard class, with about 250

In November, Gov. Rick Snyder signed off on legislation that exempts certain corrections officers and retirees from gun-free zones. The CPL exemption laws, 2015 PA 206 and

2015 PA 207, were given immediate effect. In January, MDOC released several documents outlining who is eligible for the exemption and how they can obtain necessary paperwork to get a special license. Those documents are available on the MCO website. Specific questions about eligibil-

ity should be directed to MDOC.

The passage of these bills was a huge victory for MCO. Several similar bills have died in the

The MDOC Honor Guard pays tribute to fallen law enforcement officers and other public servants.

celebration gives them a chance to unwind and raise money at the same time. The 2015 holiday event was held at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center at Michigan State University and featured a dinner, a silent auction, a DJ, and dancing.

Honor Guard members train every other month. They practice include car-

## BARGAINING: EXECUTIVE BOARD KEEPS BUSY WITH PREPARATIONS FOR NEXT ROUND ON HEALTH CARE, WAGES

went smoothly until the conversation turned to

• OSE insisted on a one-year contract for wages and health care due to their uncertainty about the federal excise tax on premium health care plans

The Cadillac Tax is part of the Affordable Care Act, better known as Obamacare. The "theory" behind the tax is that what employers save on health care, they'll pass on to employees in higher wages. Some economists say this theory is too

OSE took the position they could not weigh the possible effects of the tax on the state budget, tive agreement that provided a one-year contract on wages and health care, but a three-year contract on everything else. The agreement includes a 1% base increase effective Oct. 1, 2016, and a 1.5% lump sum payment in Oct. 2016.

MCO secured status quo language on health care with some enhancements, such as additions • Bargaining began in August 2015. Everything to the vision and dental plans and dependent life insurance.

> • MCO members voted on the contract in November. Although voter turnout was low, the contract passed 1,314 to 516.

• Staff are looking into options for printing the contract. OSE is in the process of preparing an index and table of contents.

• The Cadillac Tax was scheduled to take effect in 2018. This is the information MCO and OSE had during bargaining. But since then, the Cadillac Tax effective date was pushed back to 2020. This was done in part due to the unpopularity of the tax, and the uncertainty of employers around the nation about its financial impact on their budgets.

• MCO leaders and staff are preparing to return to the bargaining table this summer to hash out wages and healthcare. They are exploring every resource available to understand the changing healthcare landscape. They've been attending workshops, reading literature, and asking attorneys for advice.

"We will leave no stone unturned in our fight to create a stronger bargaining position," said MCO President Tom Tylutki, chief negotiator of the MCO bargaining team.

• Like in previous bargaining cycles, MCO staff will keep members updated throughout negotiations. The best way to get the latest information is to sign up for MCO emails. If you haven't already, go to mco-seiu.org and click Sign up for Emails on the Right.

Staff are working toward collecting a personal home email address from every members. This is the best way to ensure you get each and every email MCO sends.

We'll keep you updated throughout bargaining on health care and wages this year.

# More recruits join the ranks; WHV holds special recruit class

# Gov. Snyder signs CPL exemption for certain corrections staff

legislature over the last few years.

If you are one of the many members who called or emailed legislators in support of this bill, we thank you. Without your comments, this wouldn't have been possible.

Jeremy Tripp, MCO director of governmental and political affairs, also deserves thanks for the countless hours he has put in meeting with legislators to get this done.

To get the most up-to-date information on bills and legislation, sign up for our emails. If you haven't already, go to mco-seiu.org and click Sign up for Emails on the Right.



# **RUO hearing update online**

A hearing on the RUO lawsuit was scheduled for 10 a.m. Feb. 17 at the Ingham County Courthouse in Mason.

This MCO Report was being sent to the printer the week of the hearing.

To find out what happened in court, please go to mco-seiu.org Union leaders and staff are keeping this fight alive with member support. Thanks for sticking with us!

# MDOC Honor Guard 'best of what we are'

rying caskets, folding flags, and posting the colors. Jason Huss, Honor Guard member and CO But their annual holiday

at St. Louis, said the most important thing they do is comfort grieving spouses, children, and parents. Their presence acknowledges and shows solemn gratitude for the sacrifice of their loved one

Everywhere they go, Honor Guard members show character and portray a positive, professional image of the MDOC.

"You are the best of

what we are and what we do," Director Heidi Washington said at the holiday event.

Kirk Downs, an Honor Guard member and corporal at SAI, said the MDOC Honor Guard is widely respected.

"It's great to travel the country and meet these other departments and see how much they respect the Michigan Department of Corrections Honor Guard," Downs said.

Thank you, Honor Guard members.



Clockwise from top left MSU memorabilia auctioned off at tl Honor Guard holiday party John Cordell, Commander of the MDOC Honor Guard. People mingle at the Honor Guard holiday party.





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MCO's 24-Hour Answering Service

When a critical incident occurs at your facility, contact MCO's 24-Hour Answering Service by dialing 1-800-451-4878 and pressing 2.

The MCO Report is an award-winning publication of the Michigan Corrections Organization, Service Employees International Union Local 526M. The editor reserves the right to refuse any incoming articles that are detrimental to MCO, SEIU Local 526M and its policies and the policies of the SEIU. All articles or letters must be submitted by the first of the month prior to the next issue

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To send e-mail to an MCO staff member, type his or her first name followed by: amco-seiu.org.

f you have changed your address, phone number, or e-mail, please inform MCO mmediately at 1-800-451-4878 (phone), 1-800-327-5266 (fax), or complete the online form on our web site.

> Visit us on the web at: www.mco-seiu.org Editor - Anita Lloyd

"Were it not for the labor press, the labor movement would not be what it is today, and any man who tries to injure a labor paper is

# Are you volunteering? Tell us.

MCO would like to feature more positive stories and photos about our members' volunteer work in their communities. This can help us increase public support of corrections officers. If you or someone at your facility volunteers, please let us know! Fill out and mail this form to MCO or fill out a volunteer form on our website.

Volunteer name(s) and facility

Volunteer contact numb

Volunteer contact emai

Please list and describe your volunteer activities

coming volunteer events
What:

Date and Time Location:

Tom Tylutki, President Cary Johnson, Trustee Ed Clements, Trustee Ray Sholtz, Trustee Paul Jones, Trustee MCO CHAPTER PRESIDENTS than Hoath, Lakeland da Esu, Macomb ard Snively, Marquette n Bott, Central Michigan den TerHaar, Muskegor sa Nolan. Newberr **k Dunn,** Oaks ald Niemi, Ojibwa nt Kowitz, Parnall **ld Garver,** Pugsley m Earley, Michigan Reformatory el Reed, Saginaw oletoe McDonald, SAI Program ert Fisher, St. Louis ck McGough, Thumb en Ansorge, West Shorelind Hassen, Woodland



a traitor to the cause." -- Samuel Gompers