



CEC 7



# ROLL CALL

**CORRECTIONAL EMPLOYEES COUNCIL**

**81st Texas Legislative Session, January 2009**

**By Toby Tobias**

**Special Representative, AFSCME/CEC7**

All Things being equal for the beginning of this 81st Texas Legislative Session, does not mean there is equality where Correctional Officer's Salary Package stands in the overall fifty states. Consider for the moment the absolute massive size of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice as compared to all other states, and where the Agency stands on the pay scale: 48th out of fifty. This is unacceptable and a serious blight for this legislative session. The time is now for TDCJ and all community support groups to close ranks and resolve this deplorable issue head on. Albeit there are other real and tangible issues within the Agency, ie. the high turnover rate, recruitment and the large one - retention. Much to the credit of Executive Director Brad Livingston and TDCJ employees. However, we should not overlook for a moment that another Executive Director, Brian Olsen of AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) and TCEC7 (Texas Correctional Employee Council 7), was absolutely instrumental in starting the push for correctional officer pay equality with Brian Olsen's letter of January 2008 to Governor Rick Perry, citing the deplorable pay (as compared to other correctional agencies) and other conditions existing in the Agency, with copies to all the major and minor news agencies, requesting an emergency 10% only for Cos I and Cos II, and was implemented May 1, 2008, with Agency's Comprehensive Plans to follow. You could safely say Brian Olsen's letter to Governor Perry kicked the door open and started the ball to rolling in the direction of the Texas Legislative body as a whole for the 81st session.

Since it is football season, I will close with a football analogy. It's the fourth quarter with correctional officers at the opposition's one-foot line, 30 seconds left on the game clock, no time outs. The score: Corrections 13, Opposition 17; 4th and goal. Do you punch it over or just say we had another losing session?

**WE THINK NOT, NOT THIS TIME. LET'S TAKE IT TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTITIVES.**

**"Be Prepared"  
By Brian Olsen**

We are working on our Legislative agenda as this newsletter goes out. We worked all of 2008 on getting our voices heard. (See website on the Emergency Pay Raise Request in January 2008.) What we ask for and what we get are not always the same so we need as many members out working our agenda as possible. The pay raise is not a done deal by any means, and the state will be trying again to privatize units and departments and eroding your benefits. We can not sit back and wait for this to happen and we have not. All year staff and members have been meeting with politicians and giving testimony supporting all the issues. Our first Lobby is scheduled for March 12, 2009. Contact your local for further info or call 1-800-374-9772. It takes us all to get this job done. We have strength in numbers so sign up a friend to help us get our numbers up for the Legislative session.

## Community Action

President Ray Stewart not only helps hurricane victims but works on fellow member Arlan Fosters political campaign. Ray traveled the disaster area feeding many needy folks after Hurricane Ike, and also spread the word about Arlans "Change" campaign for House District 18. Our hats are off for Rays hard work and dedication to the employees of the Texas prison system. Thanks Ray!



Afsme President Ray Stewart and volunteer Tabatha use the cooker to help organize and assist in political action for member Arlan Foster running for State Rep.

## “Your voice is being heard”

On Oct. 14th AFSME/CEC7 had two members testify to the Senate Sub committee on corrections in Austin Texas. They voiced their concerns on what needs to be changed within TDC. This was the third time that AFSCME had brought members to Austin in 2008 to let the TDC employees be heard. AFSCME it must be noted, is the only employee organization to attend all these hearings and give testimony.

We are pushing for 20% for security, 10% for non security and a career ladder for maintenance, industry, AG and Drivers. We are also asking for the Hazardous duty increase of 2 dollars for these people as well. The tuition reimbursement will be back on track as well as discussion of payout for the O.T. and comp time banks. We need all members and friends to contact their own state Senators and state Representatives and push our agenda. Without this we are dead. Our first Lobby day is scheduled for March 12, 2009 so contact your local for further information.

We have been meeting with politicians all year but now we need to put a major push on starting Jan. 15th, 2009 to close the deal on our agenda. This is not a done deal by any means so get ready to go to work. We look forward to seeing you all. God Bless and Godspeed.

**1. We Did It In '95!**

- Grievance and Mediation Process **PASSED**
- Employees Paying for Uniforms **DEFEATED**
- Employees Paying for Meals **DEFEATED**
- Employees Paying State Portion of SS TAX **DEFEATED**
- Bills on Privatization **DEFEATED**
- Employee T.B. Test (no charge) **PASSED**
- Inmate Assaults on Correctional Officers (Misdemeanor Enhanced to Felony) **PASSED**

**2. We Did It In '97!**

- Across-the-Board Pay Raises **PASSED**
- Enhanced Retirement Benefits **PASSED**
- Permission to Possess Tobacco Products In Designated Smoking Areas **PASSED**
- Elimination of Polygraph Testing as a Condition of Employment **PASSED**
- Halt to Privatization **PASSED**

**3. We Did It In '99!**

- Across-the-Board Pay Raises **PASSED**
- HB 1713 - Chunking bill - Throwing Feces, Urine, Body Fluids On A Corrections Officer (Misdemeanor Enhanced to Felony) **PASSED**
- HB 2943 - Compensatory Time Bill (Rider Passed) - This Bill Directs The Agency To Accommodate As Far As Possible Or Pay Overtime **PASSED**
- HB 1113 - Provides Protection To TDCJ Officers In Emergency Situations While Dealing With Inmate Escapes In Their Immediate Care, Custody and Control **PASSED**

**4. We Did It In The 2000 Interim!**

- \$100.00 Per Month Pay Raise **PASSED**

**5. We Did It Again In This 2001 Session!**

- 4% Increase For Higher Education: UTMB, Texas Tech and Non-Security Personnel **PASSED**
- Correctional Officer Career Ladder: Entry Level CO's, 8% increase; Veteran Officer (8yrs), 16.25% increase, with commensurate %'s from CO II's and up. Including Majors. **PASSED**
- HB 3185: Professional Respect Now (passed by Senate and House, voted by Governor 6/17/01) **VETOED**
- SB 292: Retirees Dues Deduction - Authorizes the Retirement System to deduct from all retirees a monthly annual payment equal to the amount of a fee for that persons membership in a state organization. **PASSED**
- Employee out of pocket expense in a state employee organization **PASSED**
- Employee out of pocket expense **PASSED**

**6. WE Stopped Privatization In 2003!**

**7. We FOUGHT for these In 2005!**

- Pay Increases for 2005 (4%), 2006 (3%) **PASSED**
- Hazardous Duty Pay Increases **PASSED**
- Stop Privatization **PASSED**
- Heros Bill - Mortgage Assistance **PASSED**
- Banked O.T. - **DEFEATED** - Forcing TDCJ to pay O.T. instead of banking 240 hrs.

**8. Special Note: In 2003 AFSCME negotiated changing the L4 disciplinary enhancement to staying on your record for one year instead of two.**

**9. Special Note: Sergeants overtime; After constructive talks with AFSCME, TDCJ changed the classification for Sergeants, so they now have OT.**

**10. AFSCME is the only Correctional Employees Union to have consistent labor management meetings.**

**11. We negotiated for 3 tardies before officers written up.**

**What we asked for in 2007**

- 1. Stop the continuing spread of privatization in Texas Corrections. **WON**
- 2. Stop the erosion of employee insurance. **WON**
- 3. A 5% pay raise for 2007 and 5% for 2008 with an additional 5% for those with hazardous duty pay. **2% & 2% WON**
- 4. A CO 6 position. **LOST**
- 5. Tuition reimbursement. **VETOED**
- 6. Arbitration as a fourth step in the grievance procedure. **LOST**
- 7. A bill stopping the banking of overtime. **WON**
- 8. Meet and confer. **WON (SENATE BILL 909)**
- 9. UTMB pay raise. **WON**
- 10. Maintenance career ladder. **LOST IN SENATE**
- 11. TX Correctional Peace Officers (not T-Close). **LOST**
- 12. Comp time paid after a year if not used. **LOST**
- 13. Step one grievance to be outside the unit. **LOST**

**2009 is yet to be determined!**

*From one of the desks at the Correctional Employees Council*

*It feels good to make special plans and actually follow through with them, however sometimes things don't work out that way. I left work early one day so that I could take my two daughters to lunch (8yrs old & 16). I'm headed home on the 2.9 mile road, to get the girls, turn around, and head back to town for a little fun, we are headed for town and almost at the end of the road, and my 16 year old said "mom, that was smoke, turn around". I ask her if the smoke was coming from the white house, and she politely told me IT WAS....from the white house. I hate to admit that I really didn't want to turn around..the man that lives there is so grumpy and unpleasant that most of the time I just drive by without even acknowledging anyone lived there, and it was 101 degrees, but, mainly because the man was so unpleasant.*

*We pulled into the driveway between the two houses and there was a lot of smoke, these houses were sitting on 177 acres and without any measurable rain for over two months we had a real problem. We got the water hoses going and my daughter noticed a truck sitting just inside the pasture, she yelled "call 911" and ran to see if there was anyone in the truck, the truck was all around the truck. I called 911-my daughter came back, no one was in the truck-we also couldn't locate anyone in either house so we set out to rake up dead leaves, pine needles and other fuel that was too close to the house and propane tank-and we kept water going-the fire department showed up about 30 minutes later, we were there close to two hours-101 degree heat-four fire trucks here now, so we decided to get out of the way and to try and salvage some of our day.....and all for a grumpy unpleasant person. We had a fun time on our outing, and talked about how scared we had been earlier, one of those things that if you had to think about you probably would of done different, we had a fun day but it was time to head home. We had got to the 2.9 mile road only to be stopped by Mr. M and his wife, they said the fire department told them that had it not been for our actions, they probably would of lost a lot, (because of my daughters actions). We have had nothing but smiles and waves from Mr. & Mrs. M. My thought behind sharing this was not to brag (by any means), well maybe a little on my daughter. My 16 yr old did the right thing and I learned something form her that day, it felt good to do a nice thing for a frumpy, unpleasant person. They always complain, they always are "having a bad day" wouldn't it be nice if they could HEAR you, not just listen but "HEAR" you...when you say "im having a bad day too:. No matter where you go each day, work, play whatever.....I learned that day, to just "do the right thing". Be pleasant to a co-worker.....help him out.....encourage him.....if nothing else.....IT WILL MAKE YOU FEEL GOOD.. .....and I THINK THAT'S IMPORTANT.*

Got something to say e-mail me at: [afscme7@wt.net](mailto:afscme7@wt.net)

## **"We will not forget you"**

We have fought long and hard for the correctional officers over the last 17 years and this union has grown significantly over the years to become a powerful force in the state wide political arena. But because we have fought so hard for the "grey shirts", some people think we have forgotten about the non security employee. I want ALL non-security to know we have not forgotten you. We are pushing for a non-security 10% pay raise as well as a career ladder for the Industry maintenance like we did in 2006. Part of that strategy is to not allow the private industry to move in like they have tried to do in the past. Yes, they want to take over administration positions as well as truck driving, inmate transportation industry and maintenance. This union is the only road block. This goes for UTMB as well..East Texas Medical has shown more than a little interest in taking over the medical aspects of TDCJ. There are many wolves at our door and AFSCME will be there to fight them off.

Nathaniel Quarterman  
CID Director TDCJ  
Huntsville, Texas 77340

October 22, 2008

Director Quarterman,

*As the head union official for AFSCME/CEC7, I am requesting that the agency allow sealed water to be taken into the prison units. Officers are not always near water to get a drink, and we do not want the good Co's to suffer. Even with "unit water", officers rarely get a break to get the water. I understand the problems we now face on the units due to the recent contraband found, but as I first stated "I do not want the good officers to suffer because of a few bad apples". We will work with you the best way we can to get through this tough time, but I must state, in order to get hiring standards in place the correctional officers will need a realistic professional salary to draw other professionals into this agency. I also believe the tuition reimbursement bill sponsored by AFSCME and Rep. Lois Kolkhorst will go a long way to professionalize this agency. This bill will help the agency to develop the managers of the future and it is sad that Governor Perry vetoed this visionary bill.*

*We have spoken with Senator Whitmire about allowing the water back in the units and he said he would look into it. Please help hard working Co's who work for this state.*

  
President AFSCME/CEC7  
Ray Stewart

  
Exe. Dir. AFSCME/CEC7  
Brian E. Olsen



AFDSCME/CEC7 Connection  
Oct. 10th 2008

## Elections

On Oct. 12 2008 AFSCME/CEC7 elected new executive Board. From left to right. Paula Gay 2nd Vice President, Marion Terry Recording Sec., Ray Stewart President, Don McCoy 1st Vice President, Jim Scott Sec. Treasurer, being sworn in by past President Arlan Foster. Congratulations to all of them. We have a lot of work to do in the 09' Legislature, and these veteran Union members will lead us into the foray.

# Lobby Day 2009

AFSCME/CEC7 will have our first membership Lobby Day march 12th, 2009. Meeting at 9am at the AFL-CIO building in Austin Texas. We cannot use the AFL-CIO's parking area it is already designated parking. Offenders will have to move their cars or be towed. Use the streets with parking meters so bring change, or use one of many parking garages down town. For more information call your Local or call Council Headquarters in Huntsville at 1-800-374-9772. We need a good turn out so please make plans to help us fight for the pay raise and our other bills to be filed.

## “Scrambled”

The chairman of the House corrections sub committee Representative Jerry Madden has invited Executive Director of AFSME/CEC7 to a special presentation of the new cell phone scrambling technology at the Travis Justice Center in Austin, Texas. We as a union have come a long way to be invited to this program but it does speak to us as a union how much we are respected and our professionalism. 10 year ago we would not even have been considered. We are the only employee organization to be given this honor. Stay tuned...

# TESTIMONY

On June 4, 2008 AFSCME/CEC7 testified to the Joint Texas Senate and Texas House of Representatives Sub Committee on Corrections. In that testimony AFSCME Executive Director testified that corrections officers in Texas should be brought up to a National average of between \$40,000.00 and \$45,000.00 to give those officers dignity and a professional living wage. AFSCME believes pay is a huge problem and increase will go along way to stop the massive turn over rate and professionalize the agency.

TDCJ has shown that they were listening to AFSCME and brought forth a proposal that is very aggressive for the first time in the agency. The agency knows full well what is at stake and was willing to go out on a limb to get officers a decent wage.

The TDCJ Board of Directors has approved this increase. It now goes to the Legislature in January 2009 to be looked at. It is by no means a done deal. The Texas Legislature must approve this pay increase. It is not going to be easy to get this passed. It will take a lot of hard work and blood, sweat and tears to get this done. Not all legislators will want TDCJ to get this raise. It will be a hard fought battle with no guarantee. If you don't fight for this you will NOT get it. We as an organized employee organization are already working on this issue and we are poised to get this done. We as a union can get this done with your help.

What you must do as a member is Register to Vote, Contact your state Senator and state Representative NOW, and let them know how you feel. Also get to their offices in their Districts and put pressure on them, and get your friends and family to do the same.

In order to get this increase we must work together and we must start now. The more members we get the stronger we are. Sign someone up into our union because we have strength in numbers and we have the PLAN, the expertise and the resources to get it done. Fight with us not against us. AFSCME is the only hope. We are known and respected so the choice is yours.

To find out who your State Representatives are go to the "Texas Legislature online" or the Texas AFL-CIO websites, or call your local office or Council 7 Headquarters at 1-800-374-9772.

They are also asking for a 10% pay increase for Non-Security.



*AFSCME Activities Trailer at Texas City Prison; Carde Young with Renee Tengler in the background setting up.*

## **AFSCME Delivers again Afsme sends help to victims**

After Hurricane Ike AFSCME/CEC7 was on the job again. We delivered water, sodas, ice and in some cases cooked for the correctional employees at the Plane, Henley, Hightower, Stiles, Lut Blanc, Gist, and Texas City units. We were glad to do it and the employees were happy to see us. We also took water and sodas to the pre-service in Angleton. As the union for state correctional employees we feel it is our responsibility to not only represent our members but to also help them when ever disaster strikes. We did so with Rita and now with Ike. When you see our big green trailer pull up you know your union is at work, so if you are out on an escape look for us we will be right around the corner.

## AFSCME/ CEC 7 Benefits Update

To ensure our members understand the different member's benefits, we are sending out this benefits update. Taking advantage of these benefits can save money for members, so please take them into consideration.

- 1.) Representation at employee disciplinary, grievance and mediation hearings. A staff Rep. or steward will attend to assist in all aspects of this process.
- 2.) Lobbying in Austin and Washington by AFSCME for wages, hours, and working conditions. We also stopped privatization this last legislative session.
- 3.) Scholarship programs for union members and their families.
- 4.) Training given for stewards, lobbying, and organizing.
- 5.) Discount Life Insurance for members.
- 6.) Discount home owners and car insurance through Nationwide in Huntsville (936) 291-8313.
- 7.) Low rate home mortgage and equity loans through Chase Bank at 817-856-3667, ask for Donna
- 8.) \$2,500 Accidental Death Policy free with membership.
- 9.) Union Plus credit card and secured credit card if you have credit problems.
- 10.) Opportunity to become involved and run for union positions, local, state, and national.
- 11.) Union Privilege Legal Services Program.
- 12.) Grievance filing assistance.
- 13.) Union Driver and Traveler discount.
- 14.) North American Van Lines discount.
- 15.) Car Rental discounts.
- 16.) Union made checks.
- 17.) Theme Parks discounts.
- 18.) Union member flower service.
- 19.) National Ear Care Plan.
- 20.) Consumer Credit Counseling, Budgeting, and Debt management (361) 808-9942 @ no cost.
- 21.) Huntsville Funeral Home discount to AFSCME members and family (936)295-6363
- 22.) \$500.00 Discount at Wiesner Auto in Huntsville for new or used autos for an AFSCME member.
- 23.) AFSCME members eligible to get a college degree through mountain state university at a 20% discount. This can be done online and is fully accredited, call 304-237-3658 or 1-866-367-6781.
- 24.) Dr.S Union 281-923-3886 for workers comp injuries problems.

**These programs are just a few of our membership benefits you can enjoy. Thanks for standing with your union. We fight for you.**

**1-800-374-9772    New Website@CEC7.org**

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