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# AFSCME WV Organizer

'Proudly representing thousands of WV State & City employees and Retirees'

## CHANGE IS TRULY JUST A FOUR LETTER WORD

By Gordon Simmons, Local 3248 Secretary/Treasurer and AFSCME WV Labor 2004 Volunteer

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### 'Labor Donated'



Willie and the boys. Willie Nelson was a featured act at the huge Labor Day Rally in Charleston this year and poses with Organizer Rich Patrick and Council President Ronnie Napier. AFSCME was a major sponsor of the 'Reinvest in America' Labor Day event. Check our web site for more pictures.

There has never been an election more important to the interests of public employees than this one. The Bush Administration has waged a class war against working people, including those in public service and retirees. We can expect them to increase the level of hostility even more. Attacks on overtime pay, the privatization of Social Security and other public services, and the further erosion of state and local budgets cannot be reversed without a victory for John Kerry.

This year, West Virginians have an a greater chance to cast their votes than ever: **No excuse early voting:** available at county courthouses until October 30. **Absentee ballots:** for those who will be out-of-district or

otherwise unable to get to the voting place; available until October 27.

Four years ago, apathy and manipulation by wedge issues helped give Bush the vote in West Virginia. If we are going to unseat a president who won't ever admit to making a mistake, we must be willing to admit that our state's vote then was itself a mistake. And this year is the chance we have to correct it.

Four years ago, we could use the excuse that we didn't know that Bush would undermine not only the public sector, but the entire economy as well. Four years ago we could say that we didn't know our service people would be bogged down in a quagmire in Iraq. Or that energy and insur-

ance companies would have a voice to the exclusion of working people. Or that a tax break for the super-rich would imperil government services at all levels.

Now we know. A simple four letter word is how we fight back...V-O-T-E. You do it, get your family, friends and co-workers to your county Courthouse for easy, early voting till October 30 or on November 2 at your polling place.



Kerry-Edwards in WV

## Erik Wells for Congress - Warren McGraw for Justice.

Erik Wells cares about what all West Virginians care about: Affordable health care for all, jobs and a level playing field. He is smart, well liked and willing to debate Shelly Moore Capito any time and any where. AFSCME supports Wells.

Warren McGraw is the 'peoples judge' in WV. His opponent is mean spirited and controlled by the filthy rich coal barons and wealthy insurance and hospital executives. For a fairer, more just state, vote for Judge McGraw for Supreme Ct.



Erik Wells



Warren McGraw



## **WV WOMEN, WE HAVE IT...WILL WE USE IT?**

*‘Not just the right to vote, but the right to choose our next President’*

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I wanted to share an experience I had this week when I made a get out the vote call to another female union member. When I asked her who she would select for President in this election she said: “ Hold on a minute, I have to go into another room to answer you”.

When she got to the other room, she advised me she was in the bathroom with the door closed. She said she intended to vote for John Kerry for President. She said she did not want her husband or son to hear her because they would give her grief over her vote. She said they would not vote for John Kerry because they think John Kerry would take their guns away.

Her reasons for her vote for Kerry was that she believes John Kerry has a better plan for women and their families. She was well informed about job losses, the cost of healthcare, and all the stories about people who have lost healthcare coverage, and their pensions.

She knew that John Kerry has co-sponsored pay equity legislation in Congress every year since 1995, and she also knew that President Bush ended the Equal Pay Matters initiative at the Labor Department.

She also knew that John Kerry was an avid hunter and had no plans to take her husband’s gun away. I offered to send her John Kerry’s position on gun owners rights so she can leave it for him to read.

If any AFSCME WV member would like to help canvas union members in your area of the state on the last Saturday (10/30) prior to the November election, call me at the Council 77 office. As active, involved women, we CAN choose the next President of the United States.



In Solidarity,  
Barbara Spradling  
Local 3248 Vice President &  
AFSCME WV Labor 2004 Volunteer

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### **AFSCME WV RETIREE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Ernest Terry**

We all have been bombarded with a lot of information about the election this year and I think all of us are ready to put it behind us as soon as we cast our vote on November 2nd or before if we take advantage of the WV early voting law. Now is one of those times when we need to pause and think about who we are and where we came from. Most of us worked most of our adult lives as public servants with low pay which means we also retired with low pensions but with a pretty good health plan.

Because of this we joined AFSCME RETIREEES to better protect our insurance and to strive for cost of living raises for our pensions. There is only two ways we can accomplish our goal:

1. Elect the people who care about us and are willing to help us.
2. Lobby, call and write the people we elect and tell them what we need.

By now we should know who is on our side and we trust they will be elected and will help us.



Local 3252 (Doddridge & Harrison) met in Clarksburg recently to elect a new slate of Officers and Stewards from a variety of state agencies like Highways, DHHR and the Auditor's Office. Delegates were selected for the area AFL-CIO meetings. President George Shelhammer, Vice-Pres Francis Issacs and Steward Chuck Paugh plan to have regular monthly meetings, put AFSCME Bulletin Boards in every work place and organize 50 new members in the next 2 months.

AFSCME Local 3226 leaders Rally in Beckley for Kerry-Edwards. From L to R: Robbie Massey, Andy Mac-Donld, William Robinson, Rich Patrick, Jim Prater and Robin Wagner. The little girl with the button is Andy's daughter. She made national TV and is on an AFSCME GOTV tape sent to every State in America.



Thousands if people from all over the state attended this year's huge Labor Day event in Charleston. It was said by many to be the largest Labor Day event in the history of West Virginia. International Union Presidents, top name entertainment such as Willie Nelson and Nancy Griffith, good food and fireworks made the event fun for all. AFSCME was the largest financial contributor to this event and at left are just some of the members who volunteered at the AFSCME booth. Organizer Rich Patrick said several state employees stopped by the booth to discuss and join AFSCME.



**Member Updates:** Many calls have been received inquiring about Brother Kevin Boggs and his courageous battle with cancer. Kevin is our state wide Executive Vice-President, President of Kanawha Local 3248 and a valuable employee of our friend, WV Treasurer John Perdue. Keep Kevin, his wife Nancy and their daughters in your thoughts and prayers. Cards and notes can be sent to 1108 Wilkie Drive, Charleston, WV 25314. Brother Eddie Harman, the Vice President of AFSCME Retirees Chapter 77 and retired DOH employee from McDowell County has made a miraculous recovery from a terrible auto accident last Christmas. Eddie expressed appreciation for the donations and support from AFSCME members and AFL-CIO members throughout West Virginia. Mailing address is Eddie Harman, HC 32, Caretta, WV 24821.

**Public Employees Lobby Day** for next year will be held on President's Day (February 21, 2005) at the Capitol. Make your plans to attend now. In addition to a morning filled with Lobbyist and Legislative Issues training and talks with invited guests including our New Governor, the State Treasurer and State Auditor, we will have a Legislative Lunch reception where all our Delegates and Senators will be invited to join us at the Capitol for a catered buffet lunch. It should be a productive way to discuss issues important to public employees and have some fun as well. More details will be mailed and posted on our web site early January 2005.

**Every West Virginian and American has an opportunity—and a reason—to vote.** Try to show up to help canvas other union members about the upcoming election on Saturday October 23 and 30 at 10 AM. Efforts will go on at 8 different cities in WV. Call the Council Office at 1-800-642-1983 to get all the details. On October 31 (Halloween Day) at the WV State Capitol steps facing the river a 'Get Out The Vote' labor rally will be held from 2:00 PM till 4:00 PM featuring many International Union Presidents, food and live entertainment.

**I'M TOO POOR TO  
VOTE REPUBLICAN**

**Vote David Felinton, Mayor of Huntington**

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1-800-642-1983 Council77@aol.com

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Terry Reed, Area Field Services Dir  
Michele Lewis, Area Political Dir



**'Return Postage Guaranteed'**

Happy Halloween.  
It IS spooky to  
think you might not  
VOTE November 2

