



# THE CLASSIFIED

AFSCME Local 4041 State Employees Union



Winter 2017

communications@nvafscme.org

## A Message From Your Local President

Classified



Hello Brothers and Sisters:

As we are coming to the end of the year I would like to thank our Executive Board, Chapter Boards, Local and International Staff, Legislative supporters, sister

union affiliates and most importantly my fellow members for all the hard work and sacrifices we made this past year to grow, strengthen and move our union forward.

These are some of the achievements or successes we had this past year. We went into the legislative session with priorities in mind and even though we were not successful in achieving all our priorities we did have some gains and wins. Through the efforts of those mentioned above we improved on the COLA's to restore our salaries that was originally offered, find additional funding for PEBP, we were instrumental in passing the Capital Improvements bill, stopped privatization within DHHS, passed our own Investigative bill which strengthened employees due process rights as well as improving our ability to defend our members workplace rights. And thanks to our friends in the State Senate, a Collective Bargaining bill was brought forward that would have finally give state workers a seat at the table through a contract but was unfortunately vetoed by the Governor.

We didn't stop there. During the year we were active in growing our union through the AFSCME STRONG Program, initiating our own organizing blitzes, where activist members with the support of staff knocked on coworker's doors to enlist them in the struggle for restoration of salaries, affordable health coverage and working conditions.

Through these efforts of worker to worker, member to member conversations, we empowered employees at Rawson Neil Psychiatric Hospital who met with administration management and were successful in obtaining the following:

1. Inclusion of employees in the decision making of staffing the facility
2. Use seniority as a priority in shift bidding
3. Include weekend days off as an option for all employees
4. Limit the amount of movement of staff

It didn't stop there either. At the Florence McClure Women's Prison through worker empowerment, members of our union raised the issues of excessive mandatory overtime on correctional officers and by working with the warden obtained open shifts to correctional officers at other institutions which reduced the stress to workers at this facility.

Lastly, I would like to mention the Senate recall efforts, which came as a surprise. Through the efforts of membership, local leadership, local and International staff along with coalition partners and union affiliates as well as the community we have so far been successful in stopping this reckless and needless recall effort.

Through worker to worker conversation, member activism and worker empowerment we are growing, strengthening, building and moving our union forward. We cannot rest on our successes we need to continually build on them. 2018 is an election year it will be a big year for us where we can elect a Governor who will sign a collective bargaining agreement, finally giving us a voice. Something to think about as the new year approaches.

Our struggle continues and we will not be able to sustain our forward motion without all of us making sacrifices of time and activism for our union. This is your union, our union. Help me in making it all it can be.

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and a safe, joyous and prosperous Happy New Year.

*Harry J. Schiffman*

Harry J. Schiffman  
President, AFSCME Local 4041

### Contributors

- ▶ Debra Berko
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### AFSCME Local 4041

#### Office Locations

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## From Desert South Chapter

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Brothers and sisters:

Desert South Chapter will soon need to hold elections for officers and board. I am hoping that those of you who haven't had an opportunity to attend previous meetings go and do so. As a reminder, we hold our meetings on the second Thursday of each month at our office on Rancho. So, please come on down, we would love to see you.

The reason I am mentioning our elections is to remind our brothers and sisters that just paying your union dues is not enough to make a successful union. Unions are like democracies. They are not spectator sports. You can't put on your favorite sports jersey go to a game, sit in the stands and pretend you're part of that team. You are not helping your team to win that game. You're just watching. You want to help your team win? You have to actually be on that team. Run a few plays. Warm that bench, or pass out water to the other players. You're on that team when you're down on the field. Otherwise, you're a spectator.

You want your candidate to win? Voting helps. But to make sure your candidate has the best chance of winning, you have to be part of that team. Door knock, phone bank, and hand out flyers. Donate your time and effort. That gives your candidate the best chance to win. That's how democracies work.

It is also how our union works. Think of it like this: "Helping others is never more beneficial than when it's in your own self-interest." – Richard Fish from Ally McBeal. When we help each other out, we help ourselves. So, when you help your co-worker, you help yourself. When you help your union, you help yourself. Who knows what's more better for you than you? I know that's a silly way to think about the union, but sometimes it takes silly.

So, during this holiday time when we're all running around trying to stuff 36 hours into a 24 hour day. Maybe after the New Year's party when it's time to go home, or to clean up, think about you for a change. Take control of your lives and do what's best for yourselves at work by doing what's best for your union. Participate and bring your ideas and talents to your fellow brothers and sisters and help us help yourself.

In solidarity,

Gordon Milden  
President, Desert South Chapter

## Local 4041—The Oncoming Storm - Samaria Sullivan, Organizer, AFSCME Western Region

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### Rawson Neal

The employees at Rawson Neal Psychiatric Hospital stood together to ensure the clients in their facility received the highest level of coverage. With the changes to the facility, the staff worked to ensure the following:

1. Include Employees in the Decision Making on Staffing the Facility
2. Use Seniority as a Priority in Shift Bidding
3. Include Weekend Days off as an Option for all Employees

Limit the amount of Movement of Staff

A group of members at the facility circulated a petition to their coworkers, increased union membership, met with management, and presented a proposal with these items included, to the management team and were successful. This is what happens when people unite. Continue in being a part of the solution as we discuss next steps. Now more than ever, workers are joining the union to win fairness, respect and a voice on the job.

### Florence McClure Prison

The union is how we get things done!

Overwork leads to exhaustion, mistakes, and becoming less vigilant in both our professional and personal lives and can be a safety issue for the clients, the community. During a meeting with the warden, members of the union at Florence McClure Women's Prison raised issues and presented solutions to the excessive amount of mandatory overtime on correctional officers. The warden agreed to open shifts to correctional officers at other institutions to reduce the stress of the workforce at this facility. Help us build a better future for Correctional Employees. Stand with your union and join today!

## Congratulations!

It was a surprise for new AFSMCE Member Carol Barto from DHHS when she received a phone call from Local 4041 Organizing Committee who told her she was the winner of the 50 inch television. The raffle was for all new members and state employees who signed up or volunteered in the months of September, October and November, 2017

“Wow!” Carol from DHHS stated on the phone. “Is this a joke? I never won anything!” Samaria Sullivan, AFSCME International Organizer said. “Yes! Your name was entered just for joining the union. When would you like to pick up your new 50 inch flat screen smart TV?” Carol was so happy and we, the union, are happy too.

The Organizing Committee would very much like to thank Steve Lanoza and Steve Mayfield from our vendor, Legal Shield, who graciously donated the television.

Deb Berko, Organizer, Local 4041



## News From Corrections South - Raymond Shepperd, Treasurer—Corrections South

Corrections South Chapter wants to thank outgoing president Ya'qub Mustafa for his years of service leading Corrections South Chapter from an abandoned chapter to a robust chapter with growth and participation from Florence McClure Women's Corrections Center.

Our chapter regrets announcing the passing of former member and active participant in Corrections South Chapter. Paul C. Wheelock, passed away at the age of 66, on October 4, 2017. He was born August 16, 1951, in Detroit, Michigan, his family moved to Las Vegas in the late 1950s. He was a 19-year Pahrump resident. Paul graduated from Western High School with honors in 1969. He had a Rodeo Scholarship for college instead decided to go Pro Rodeo from 1969-1975. He worked for the Las Vegas Water District and Northern Pipeline as a heavy equipment operator. In 1992, he started work with the State of Nevada in Corrections as an Officer at Southern Desert Correction Center. In 1998, he transferred to the Maintenance Department as a plumber, worked his way up to Facility Supervisor III. He retired from SDCC after 25 years due to health issues. The family held a gathering of friends, family and coworkers at his home on October 15, 2017.

On November 18, 2017, Corrections South elected Kemia Leon as their new chapter president. Thank you for stepping up and accepting the challenge to lead your chapter. We know that you'll accomplish great things!

Kemia Leon - President, Corrections South



## From AFSCME



In state capitols and all the way to the Supreme Court, wealthy and powerful interests want to silence our voice and take away our freedoms. To fight back, we must lead with our values. We must stand up to say proudly who AFSCME is and what we stand for.

As mandated at previous leadership conferences, we have put together the AFSCME Agenda. This agenda is based on our commonly shared principles as a diverse union of proud public service workers. We will fight for our agenda at the negotiating table, at the ballot box, in Congress, and in state legislatures nationwide. It's an agenda that shows our members and our communities that we stand for freedom and opportunity for working families and retirees. We need champions in elected office who will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with us in these fights. That's why this agenda will also be used as part of our candidate endorsement and training process.

Today is one year before Election Day 2018, and we are rolling out not only the actual agenda, but a promotional video, graphics, and a website that all AFSCME affiliates can share across social media. More communications assets will become available in the weeks to follow.

Below, you can find links to the promotional video meant to drive traffic to the AFSCME Agenda website, and the website which is intended to push sign-ups for activism and data collection for our members. Members will also be able to download a one-page flyer version of the agenda from the website.

Promotional video: <https://youtu.be/d26w4sv-Ylo>  
Webpage: <http://agenda.afscme.org>

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## Important Dates to Remember

Hello & thank you for taking time to read the Classified. The quarterly newsletter from AFSCME Local 4041.

I hope you find the articles in this newsletter informative. If you would like to contribute an article please submit your document in Word format and email it to [communications@nvafscme.org](mailto:communications@nvafscme.org).

Here are a few important dates to remember in 2018.

Local 4041 Chapter elections: to be determined: February 2018

AFSCME Local 4041 Convention: April 5 - 8, 2018  
Location: Carson City, NV

AFSCME International Convention: July 16 - 20, 2018  
Location: Boston, MA

For information on your polling location go to: [NVSOS.gov](http://NVSOS.gov)

Primary Early Voting: May 26- June 8, 2018

Primary Elections: June 12, 2018

Last day you can register to vote in the General Election: October 6, 2018

Early Voting: October 20 - November 2, 2018

Election Day: November 6, 2018

I can't stress strongly enough how important the upcoming elections are to State of Nevada employees. Our quest to achieve collective bargaining rights depends on AFSCME members and their families supporting worker friendly candidates.

AFSCME Local 4041 will be putting out a candidate endorsement list. If you would like to be involved in our L & L Committee please contact our Las Vegas or Carson City office. As a reminder no union dues are ever used in political campaigns/advertisements. However you can become an MVP by contributing to AFSCME PEOPLE and help elect worker friendly candidates.

I hope this holiday season that you and your loved ones are healthy, happy and safe. Wishing you all the best as we head into a new year.

Sonja Whitten  
Vice President, AFSCME Local 4041

## My Experience in the Health Care System - Raya Peters, Member, Local 4041

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I've grown up on state insurance. My parents were state employees from the time I was little, first my dad then my mom too. I've always been a very healthy person. I never broke a bone or had any major illnesses. I ran cross-country and track in high school; I kept up with running for years afterwards.

But in my early 20's, when I started working for the state, I started to have weird symptoms. I was tired for no reason. I started gaining weight. I started to have emotional problems.

"Your metabolism is slowing down" or "It's just because you have a stressful job" or "Maybe you should try (insert well-meaning sentiment)" is what I'd hear from friends and family. When nothing worked, I started going to doctors. I had good insurance, right? I had the HMO for as long as I could remember, just in case I ever needed it.

No doctors had any answers, but they had lots of tests and medicine! Antidepressants to help my emotional issues, sleeping pills to help me sleep, migraine medications, inhalers for exercising too, but nothing was really working. I still felt horrible, all of the time.

I moved to Las Vegas in 2010 and had to switch insurances (did you know they were different depending on what part of the state you lived in?) but I stuck with the HMO option. I found another doctor on the plan and started the whole process over again. But this time, I'm told that my blood pressure is wildly out of control, I have an erratic heart rate and need to stop the cardio exercise.

In the meantime, referrals here, referrals there, referrals everywhere! Each referral can take 3-6 months to process and get scheduled with the new doctors. Before I knew it, two more years had gone by with no answers. I had gained over 100 lbs. My blood pressure was out of control. My anxiety and hormones basically ruled my life and was told if I didn't figure out what was going on, I might not make it to my planned wedding.

We bumped up our wedding and kept pushing for answers. I did some research and came up with a theory. I begged the doctors to run the tests, but kept getting dismissed. "You don't have that; you just need to lose some weight. Exercise some willpower. Keep taking your medicines."

"Wait a minute, I have good insurance! Just run the tests!"

A few weeks later, I get a diagnosis. No treatment plans, but that's okay. I keep doing my own research and following the doctors plans. I'm on two different blood pressure medications, a cholesterol medication, multiple supplements and other pills that are supposed to help with the anxiety and depression. And as always, telling me to find a way to exercise without too much cardio.

At this point, I hit a wall with all doctors, tests and medicines and just gave up for a while. I carried on as best as I could; I paid my insurance premiums and went to my all of appointments just to keep up on the medications as I was told.

In 2015, during a visit with my Grandma, she had a stroke. At this point, I was well over 300 lbs and not in great health myself. Pre-diabetic, morbidly obese, and scared out of my mind, I raced to the hospital. In the ER, they thought I was the one with the medical emergency and tried to admit me.

For a month, I spent every waking moment either at work or at the hospital. I didn't eat, I hardly slept. It was a definite wake up call, especially seeing how differently my Grandma was treated by HER insurance company.

My grandma was visiting from out of state. Her insurance didn't cover services in Nevada AT ALL. But guess what? They covered EVERYTHING because it was an emergency! Her out of pocket expense for the ambulance, the two weeks in the hospital, plus the four weeks in the rehab was about \$1,300.00.

Gram recovered well and I drove her home. Before I returned to Nevada, she made me promise to come back and find out what was wrong and to get better.

Can't break a promise to Gram, now can I?

So I started the whole process again, primary care doctor, running tests, referrals to other doctors, more tests, more bills.

"Try this medication." "Try that medication to help with the side effects." "That test came back weird; let's try a referral to an oncologist." That's a scary one. The oncologist says the condition I have is secondary to another condition, but he doesn't know which one. "Try going to an endocrinologist." With an HMO, the primary care doctor has to refer you, so back to them in order to get the right referral. Six more months go by, they have to refer me out of network, but I finally get in to see an endocrinologist.

Cont...

## My Experience in the Health Care System, cont.

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By this time, frustrated by the lack of help through the insurance and doctors, I enlisted a wellness coach/nutritionist. I finally started to lose some weight, for the first time in years. And it was staying off with her help and healing with food rather than medicine.

The endocrinologist took one look at me and had a very good inclination of what was wrong with me. She started me on more tests, imaging tests, and advised me to look into a certain condition. If I had that condition, she said, I really wasn't going to want to be on the HMO. With the HMO, I have to go where they tell me. She would want to refer me to a university surgical center out of state, one that specialized in treating that condition. This location is something that WOULD'N'T be covered by my current insurance, but might be possible with the PPO.

The tests came back; I have a micro adenoma, about 3mm big, at the base of my pituitary gland. That tiny little thing was probably causing all of my issues.

I did more research and sure enough, when I called the HMO they told me I would not be able to go to the center recommended by my endocrinologist. But when I called the PPO, I was told I would be. I'd have to meet the deductibles before anything was paid though.

I was faced with crippling medical bills with the chance of finally getting well or risking brain surgery for a condition with a surgeon that wasn't recommended by my doctor.

I changed the insurance with the gamble of getting healthier.

A year later, I've been seen by the surgery center and was actually scheduled for my surgery. The day before the surgery, another endocrinologist cancelled the procedure.

I've been working with my coach and have managed to lose 125 lbs, despite the medical issues. Because of that, the whole diagnosis has been thrown into question. Not that I don't have the tumor, I have that. But all of my hormone levels are under control again. I'm no longer pre-diabetic. My blood pressure is excellent. In fact, I don't take ANY medication at all, except for the occasional allergy pill or ibuprofen for a headache.

Not before I racked up that deductible though.

So here I sit, healthier but still with a tumor in my head. I can run a 5k again, no problems. But I can't run away from all of the debt I've racked up in this quest for better health.

Why did I tell you all of this? Because even with insurance, even by playing by all of the rules, I never really got the help that I needed from our health system. Ultimately it was someone outside of the normal medical profession that came up with the answers.

I went to the nutritionists recommended and covered by our insurance—I gained weight. Bariatric surgery was an option, but I didn't think it would treat the cause, just the effect. I've seen people go through those surgeries and gain the weight right back. I was scared that if I didn't find what CAUSED the weight gain that I'd be another one of those people.

We have to do better for ourselves. There is something wrong with a health care system that isn't promoting healthy living. There's nothing wrong with better living through chemistry if that's the only option. But it's not for most people. Most of us just need the RIGHT answers. I don't know how to get there, but something needs to change.

Thank you for your time.

Raya Peters – Member of AFSCME Local 4041

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## Trump Administration's Position on Janus is Yet Another Attack on Working People

By [Pablo Ros](#) December 7, 2017

Many Americans who voted for Donald Trump are fed up with a rigged system that favors corporations and the wealthy at the expense of everyone else. They want an economy that works for them, too, and they want their voices to be heard.

But the Trump administration and Republicans in Congress have spent all year trying to rig the system even more in favor of corporations and extremely wealthy people. This includes [trying to dismantle the Affordable Care Act \(ACA\)](#) to fund tax cuts for the rich, and when that failed, pushing a tax bill that is [a giveaway to corporations and the wealthy](#) at the expense of everyone else.

Add to this list the latest from the Trump administration. On Wednesday, the Office of the Solicitor General [weighed in on Janus v. AFSCME](#), a case before the Supreme Court that pits corporations and the wealthy against public service workers.

It was an opportunity for Trump to stand up for middle-class families, a chance for him to finally walk the walk when it came to his campaign promise to stand up for working people.

Instead, his administration sided with corporations and the superrich – the very funders of the case – and against workers who form strong unions. In doing so, the Trump administration gave two thumbs up to so-called “right to work” to become the law of the land.

But “right to work” is bad for working families. [“Right-to-work” laws](#) lead to lower wages for middle-class workers and weaker economic growth, and they threaten workers’ ability to form strong unions, as well as provide high-quality public services.

*I am not a liberal snowflake. My feelings aren't fragile, my heart isn't bleeding.  
I am a badass believer in human rights. My toughness is in tenderness.  
My strength is in the service of others.  
There is NOTHING more fierce than formidable, unconditional Love.  
There is NOT A THING more courageous than compassion.  
But if my belief in equity, empathy, goodness and Love indeed makes me or  
people like me snowflakes, then you should know – Winter Is Coming.*

Houston Kraft – Facebook

AFSCME Local 4041



[www.nvafscme.org](http://www.nvafscme.org)

## AFSCME Local 4041 Office Locations

Open:  
Weekdays from 8:30 am  
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Weekends and all federal  
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AFSCME Pres. Lee Saunders called the solicitor general’s court filing a “slap in the face to the working people Donald Trump pledged to lift up.”

“The ‘right-to-work’ law his administration has asked the highest court in the land to implement will drive wages down and fundamentally strip working people of the freedom to build power in numbers and negotiate a fair return on their work,” he said in a [statement](#) issued today by AFSCME, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the National Education Association (NEA) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

Saunders added that the true motivation behind *Janus* is to please wealthy and powerful political donors who want to overturn the Supreme Court’s 1977 ruling in the [Abood v. Detroit Board of Education](#) case siding with working people.

“For the Solicitor General’s Office to reverse positions under the Trump administration – when they have argued in support of the *Abood* precedent twice in the past four years – underscores the fact that this case is a purely political attack on the freedoms of working people,” Saunders said.