

Problems Reported With Outsourced IU Services

by Peter Kaczmarczyk,
 President, CWA 4730

It has been only a few months since Indiana University outsourced a portion of its motor pool and the entirety of its bookstore operation. In just a short time, serious problems have cropped up all across the Bloomington campus due to this outsourcing, problems IU was warned about.

The biggest problem is that bursar billing of textbooks is no more. This was a vitally important benefit for low-income students. A third of IU-Bloomington students and a higher percentage on other campuses were eligible for it. Barnes and Noble, who took over the bookstore operation on July 1, was not prepared to do bursar billing. As a result, many students were surprised to find they had to choose between paying for books and paying for the necessities of life.

Another problem: departments all across campus have discovered they no longer have the internal billing options for ordering textbooks they used to have. As a result, more time and en-

ergy are being devoted to ordering, which has left less time for departments to pursue more important parts of their academic mission. This extra burden placed on the departments is a prime example of the hidden costs that come with outsourcing of services.



Peter Kaczmarczyk and Su Cowling gather signatures for an anti-outsourcing petition.

The outsourcing of the rental fleet to Enterprise has also created its share of problems. There is the oft-reported problem with parking on campus. IU Fleet cars had special plates to allow for campus parking; Enterprise cars do not. Renters can get a \$5-a-day parking pass, which is not a tremendous amount but still a hidden cost passed along to

the user.

More important, however, is that departments have had difficulty finding vehicles in the Enterprise fleet that meet their specialized needs and have commented that the cars do not appear to be particularly clean or well kept up.

Also, it has been reported that Enterprise is charging some departments far more for rentals than IU did in the past and is being inflexible in negotiating price with the departments. Again, the hidden costs of outsourcing rear their ugly heads, placing extra financial burden on campus departments and forcing them to absorb the costs of the administration's ill-planned decisions.

IU may have promised not to increase student costs, but in both the case of the bookstores and the motor pool they don't seem to have a problem passing costs on to the departments that serve students. This will inevitably lead to fewer resources being devoted to student and academic needs (not to mention salaries) and more being handed over into the hands of profit-driven corporations. All of this does cost the students and it does cost IU--financially, academically, and morally.

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Labor Council Endorses Candidates

The White River Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, sent questionnaires this year to candidates in all contested races in Bloomington and Ellettsville. Endorsements were not considered for candidates in uncontested races. Issues included collective bargaining, binding arbitration, privatization, domestic-partner benefits, economic development, affordable daycare, tax abatements, and single-payer healthcare. New this year was a question about a Responsible Bidder Ordinance. Candi-

dates' responses are posted at www.whiteriverclc.org

Based on those responses and the candidates' records, the Labor Council endorsed the following:

- Mayor (Bloomington): Mark Kruzan
- Bloomington City Council District 2: Jillian Kinzie
- Bloomington City Council District 5: Isabel Piedmont
- Bloomington City Council At-Large: Tim Mayer, Andy Ruff, Susan Sandberg

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ENDA Protections at Risk for Transgender Workers

An inclusive ENDA or no ENDA at all! That's the message that more than 280 national, state, and local organizations sent to U.S. House Democrats this month.

ENDA, the Employment Non-discrimination Act (House Bill 2015), was a bill introduced earlier this year that would have made it illegal to fire, refuse to hire, or refuse to promote someone simply because of his or her sexual orientation or gender identity--with exceptions for small businesses, the military and church groups.

At the end of September, press reports surfaced that Democratic House leaders had decided to split the ENDA bill into one covering sexual orientation (House Bill 3685) and another covering gender identity. The move was made without consulting the leaders of any national lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGBT) organization.

Apparently, Democratic leaders did not think an inclusive ENDA

could pass the House, much less the Senate, and certainly not with veto-proof majorities. More cynical observers speculate that Democrats want another feather in their caps as they ap-

proach the 2008 elections and are willing to abandon transgender workers if that makes it more likely the House would approve an ENDA bill.

But the overwhelming consensus among national and state LGBT organizations is that dropping gender identity breaks faith with transgender people--one of the most discriminated-against members of our society--and weakens ENDA's protections for LGB workers, some of whom are discriminated against because of their non-conformity to gender norms. The exclusionary ENDA bill (HB 3685) also specifies that a failure to offer domestic-partner benefits cannot be considered discrimination and broadens the religious exemption so that church-affiliated employers whose mission is not primarily religious, such as Catholic hospitals and schools, could discriminate.

"It is unprecedented," says Toni Broaddus, executive director of the Equality (continued on Page 5)



Concerned citizens met with Trent Deckard, Rep. Baron Hill's field representative in Bloomington, to lobby for an inclusive ENDA bill. Left to right: Bloomington PFLAG president Jackie Hall, Indiana Transgender Rights Advocacy Alliance board member Deanna Lahre, and Indiana Equality Region 9 member Micaela Wood. Not pictured: John Clower. Photo courtesy of John Clower.

The Labor Connection is published by the White River Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO to further communication amongst local unions and between labor and the community at large.

We aim to highlight the role of organized labor within the community and to present items of concern to all working people.

We encourage submission of articles from local unions as well as other organizations which share common interests with unions and working people (see submission policy on back page).

Questions and comments can be sent to connect@whiteriverclc.org.

The Labor Connection is also available on the Labor Council website at www.whiteriverclc.org.

The next issue of *The Labor Connection* is scheduled to be released in January. Articles submitted for publication must be received by Dec. 31.

Upcoming Events

Information listed here is subject to change. Whenever possible, changes to the items listed below will be posted on our web site at www.whiteriverclc.org.

October 30: Non Profit Alliance Candidate Forum, 7 p.m., Monroe County Public Library, Room 1C.

November 8: "The Labor Movement in Korea: Challenges and Responses," IU Labor Studies Brown Bag Lecture series, noon, IU-Bloomington, Poplars Building 627.

November 12: Jobs with Justice/Outsourcing Working Group, 5 p.m., 840 W. 17th St., Ste. 9, Bloomington.

November 13: Organizational meeting of 2008 Labor Day Picnic Committee, 5:30 p.m., Fountain Square, Room 310, downtown Bloomington.

November 20: Monroe County Council discussion of Employee Free Choice Act resolution, 2 p.m., Monroe County Courthouse, Room 315.

November 28: WRCLC monthly delegate meeting, 7:00 p.m., 840 W. 17th St., Suite 9, Bloomington

December 10: Jobs with Justice/Outsourcing Working Group, 5 p.m., 840 W. 17th St., Ste. 9, Bloomington

Panel Blasts IU Outsourcing at Labor Studies Brown Bag

Nineteen campus and community members attended a panel discussion on Sept. 27 titled "Outsourcing Jobs at IU: Issues and Prospects." Panelists included Peter Kaczmarczyk, president of CWA Local 4730, Dallas Murphy, president of AFSCME Local 832, and Pat Brantlinger, Indiana University Professor Emeritus of English

Kaczmarczyk led off by arguing that recent outsourcing efforts at IU have been "ideologically driven" by true believers who think "the private sector does it better." The one-time, short-term influx of cash IU gained from recent outsourcings comes at the expense of employees' wages, benefits and union protections and threatens to place a burden on tax-supported social services, he said. He noted that IU Vice President Terry Clapacs is on record as saying that cutting benefits would be the biggest source of savings from outsourcing.

Kaczmarczyk warned students they'd be wrong to think outsourcing will help control costs. The ready cash from privatizing the bookstore and motor pool is committed to infrastructure improvements and new science buildings, he pointed out. Meanwhile, reports have begun to trickle in of reduced convenience and lower-quality service for students and staff as a result of privatization. (See story on page 1) IU administrators seem ready to turn the university into a collection of "strip malls with an occasional classroom in between," Kaczmarczyk quipped.

The cost in terms of employee loyalty, welfare, and workplace satisfaction is also significant, Kaczmarczyk argued. "We now have two classes of employees at IU, working next to one another within the same bargaining units, with different levels of pay, benefits and protections," he noted. "The staff feel cut off and abandoned. The loss of fee courtesy in particular reduces the affordability of education for the families of IU employees." And despite the administration's claim that no employee would lose his or her job, "current IU employees will be pushed out the door in the long run," he pre-

dicted. "The consulting committees set up by the administration to help it consider whether and how to privatize have included almost no service staff," he added. "The administration seems willing to treat the staff like disposable components."

Next up was Murphy, who stated it was "morally wrong to sell jobs for profit." In addition, he argued, members of the university community are receiving "substandard service due to the inadequate accountability" that comes with privatizing campus units. "Given the hefty tuition students pay, they deserve the best (continued on page 5)



Pat Brantlinger, Indiana University Professor Emeritus of English, Peter Kaczmarczyk, President of CWA Local 4730, and Dallas Murphy, President of AFSCME Local 832, were the panelists at the Labor Studies Brown Bag Luncheon on September 27th.



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WRCLC represents affiliated unions and constituency groups in the counties of Bartholomew, Brown, Greene, Lawrence, Martin, Monroe, and Owen.

Meetings: 4th Wednesday of the month
(except November & December)

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MCPL Union Organizing Committee Statement to Board

The following was read to the Monroe County Public Library Board at its meeting on Sept. 12.

The union movement at MCPL has been characterized in many ways. A common mischaracterization is that those in favor of unionization are a *small* group and that our motivations are suspect. We want the board to know that our desire for union representation has been motivated by a desire for a real voice, for a permanent conduit for communicating with the board and administration in a positive and meaningful way. In addition, while the organizing committee is 14 members of the staff, the fact that *numerous* staff members have stepped up and signed cards signifying interest in union representation should not be overlooked or taken lightly. Those interested in union representation are anything but a "small" group. What we are is a group who simply wants to formalize a channel for communication with administration and the board. What we want is an opportu-

nity to take part in discussions relevant to wages, benefits, working conditions, and policy relevant to promotion and the grievance process. And we want this communication to be positive.

Presently, decisions relevant to wages, benefits, and working conditions are determined solely by the board and the director. Those desiring union representation ask that we be given collective bargaining rights, that we be given a spot at the table when these issues are discussed. We desire to work *with* the board and administration to find solutions that insure fair treatment of staff.

We see unionization as a win-win situation. Staff will get the voice they have long sought, and the board will establish a channel for direct communication with staff. In doing so, any perceived disconnect between the staff and the board will be eliminated. For our part, we will work to identify staff concerns, to develop consensus, and to then present the board with a clear, unified vision of staff wishes regarding wages, benefits, and working condi-

tions. What we ask of you is that you give us a spot at the table and that you listen and consider.

We urge you to recognize this union. As Mr. Moberly stated when he introduced the new interim director to staff, now is a time for healing. One way to facilitate this and move the library forward is to give staff a real voice so that we can work together to make MCPL great. We love this library, and we want it to be the best it can be. The staff understands that we face serious challenges in the years ahead, but we can find real solutions if we *work together*, if there is real communication, and if that communication is transparent.

As you adjourn this evening and begin your discussions of the union movement, know that we are always available and willing to discuss our hopes for unionization with you. Communication is the key, and a union is the best way to guarantee sensible, direct communication with staff.

Appeal to the Labor-Friendly Public About MCPL Unionization

I'm writing to let you know about the current effort to secure union representation for staff at Monroe County Public Library. At the library board's work session on October 10, the library's lawyers presented a resolution that requires that 75% of the eligible unit vote, and that 50% of the eligible unit vote in favor of unionization.

This means that if the eligible unit were 100 employees, 75 would have to vote. And of those 75, 50 would have to vote "yes." (Section 4.A of the resolution contains the language in question.)

Our issue with this is that it would be very easy for anti-union folk to simply not show up to vote and thus put an end to the union drive. For example, we could have 74% of the unit show up and vote 'yes', but if no one else shows up, we get no union repre-

sentation.

Please contact the MCPL board members and let them know that the current resolution should allow for a simple DEMOCRATIC majority. To require 75% and allow for anti-union folk to simply not show up and thus kill the effort is anything but democratic. Following are the e-mail addresses of the MCPL board members:

moberlys@iquest.net
 flamingosIU52@aol.com
 paustin92@insightbb.com
 jawalsh@indiana.edu
 helpkidsreadmore@yahoo.com
 risinger@indiana.edu
 jbstockton@bluemarble.net

Sincerely,
 Phil Eskew, MCPL Technology Trainer



MCPL Board Member Randy Paul shows his support for democracy. Paul has opposed the 75% threshold for voting in a union representation election.

Panel Blasts Outsourcing

(continued from page 3)

service possible,” Murphy affirmed. He encouraged concerned citizens to continue the fight: “Community resistance to outsourcing is the only reason Barnes and Noble agreed to retain IU employees,” he said. Kaczmarczyk agreed: “Shaming the university in the media has been effective.”

Murphy pointed to schools that had to buy back contracts for privatized services when the quality of service declined. “IUPUI, Butler and Florida International all took back their custodial services,” he said. And the University of Pennsylvania, having tried out privatization of services, is now a model for de-privatizing.

Brantlinger, the third panelist, noted that the successful bidder for the IU bookstore operation—Barnes and Noble—and rival bidder Follett are the two leading bookstore corporations on American campuses, together controlling 60% of the market. They are big enough, he said, to cut deals with publishers to jack up textbook prices. “Is this an example of free competition?” he asked rhetorically. He shared a report from a professor at Southern Mississippi University that the price of her standard sociology textbook went up \$18 after Barnes and Noble took over management of the bookstore. In response to an audience question, the three panelists acknowledged that a boycott of Barnes and No-

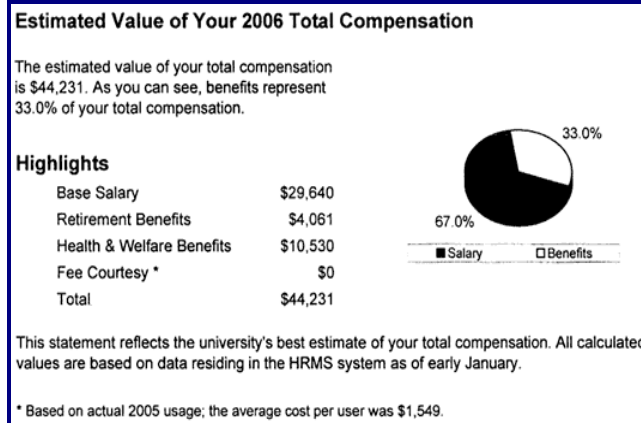
ble might offer an effective strategy. Some faculty members are already ordering their books through Boxcar Books, noted Brantlinger.

What’s happening at IU, Brantlinger argued, mirrors what’s happening around the world under the impact of neoliberal globalization, which leads

time English faculty shrink in numbers over the years from 65 to 50, with the slack taken up mostly by non-tenure-track teachers.

In response to an audience question, Brantlinger took issue with the stark distinction between academic units and university business functions that President McRobbie voiced on a Friday Edition radio program. Brantlinger pointed to the recent deal on computers forged between Sun Corporation and the Kelley School of Business, which rendered the Kelley dependent on private techies for service. Other deals with private companies involve patent rights to a certain percentage of university research, he noted. Drawing a stark distinction also underrates the contribution of service employees, “who interact with students all the time,” he said.

The next Labor Studies Brown Bag presentation is scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 8, noon, in the Poplars Building 627. Gini Park, visiting scholar from Korea, will speak on “The Labor Movement in Korea: Challenges and Responses.” For more information, e-mail Prof. Lynn Duggan at lduggan@indiana.edu.



Graphic above was part of a letter an IU employee received from IU administration. For employees who use fee courtesy, the percentage of compensation represented by benefits (and threatened by outsourcing) would be even higher.

“not to the development of the poor people of the world but to their increasing impoverishment.” Moreover, what’s affecting service jobs at IU is also affecting faculty jobs, he argued. The IU English Department affords an example of “the slow-motion privatization of academic departments,” he suggested. Brantlinger said he’s watched the full-

Patrick Brantlinger, Jobs with Justice member and IU emeritus professor of English, published “Privatizing Indiana” in the September-October 2007 issue of Academe, the official bulletin of the American Association of University Professors. The article is online at: <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe/2007/SO/Feat/Bran.htm>

Also included in the issue is “Privatizing Pennsylvania, and Then Un-privatizing” by Jerel Wohl, found online at: <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe/2007/SO/Feat/Wohl.htm>

ENDA (continued from page 2)

Federation, “for Congressional leadership to move forward on a civil rights bill that does not have the support of a single organization in the community affected by the bill.”

Pride at Work, AFL-CIO (www.prideatwork.org) and Indiana Equality (www.indianaequality.org) are among the organizations that lobbied for a return to the original, inclusive ENDA bill. “In this defining and morally transformative moment, our com-

munity has come together and said once and for all that we will leave no member behind,” said Matt Foreman, Executive Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

Despite the opposition of the Leadership Council on Civil Rights and all national and state LGBT organizations and despite the more than 14,000 constituent calls generated by the United ENDA coalition, the non-inclusive ENDA bill was passed out of committee on Oct. 16 for a vote on the floor of the House, expected later this

month. An amendment from the floor by Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.) to add gender identity back into the bill is also expected.

You can make a difference by contacting your U.S. House representative and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to voice your opposition to any ENDA bill that does not include both sexual orientation and gender identity. The U.S. Capitol Switchboard (202-224-3121) can connect you.

To follow developments, visit www.unitedenda.org.

An Interview With IU Trustee Patrick A. Shoulders

On Sept. 25, Labor Council secretary John Clower interviewed Patrick A. Shoulders, vice president of the IU Board of Trustees, about campus labor issues. The following are excerpts from that interview.

Q: The IU trustees have the power to allow recognition of a graduate student union. If there is significant support for unionization among the students, how likely is it that you and your colleagues would cooperate?

A: Speaking only for myself, I would have no problem with unionization if that is necessary to give all graduate students a fair voice. In no meeting of the trustees has the issue been addressed even indirectly.

Q: Do you foresee additional outsourcing of IU staff jobs in the near future?

A: I hope not. But it's possible. President McRobbie and a majority of the trustees have directed the administration to review 15 additional areas of auxiliary services for the potentiality of a different arrangement.

Q: A year ago, IU residential dining services looked like it was next in line for outsourcing. What changed?

A: Nothing's changed. The lack of visible action reflects the fact that this is a period of transition, with a new university president and three new trustees. Much of the decision-making about privatization doesn't reach beyond the level of the president. An example is former president Herbert's decision about the IU bookstores. At the level of the trustees, all I've heard recently is a question about the status of privatization in the Finance and Audit Committee.

Q: Is there any truth to the rumor that dining services will be consolidated under one university administrator, but with the power to bid out parts of the operation?

A: I have not heard that.

Q: So far, President McRobbie has refused to meet with campus union leaders to discuss the outsourcing issue. What are the differences you see between McRobbie and former president

Herbert on labor issues, including outsourcing?

A: President McRobbie has indicated that he's interested in creating a transparent administration. I can't imagine he has refused to meet with anyone. Perhaps there was a perceived matter of protocol involved. Both McRobbie and Herbert—and the head of any large public university, for that matter—have had to be open to the idea of increasing revenue and cutting costs. (Personally, I believe there are competing concerns.) These are times of intense pressure on university presidents. There is a constant downward pressure on tuition, together with a decline in state support. McRobbie will view his job the same as Herbert: to ensure that IU remains competitive, to look for enhanced revenue and to cut costs where possible.

Q: Should we judge the leadership of the trustees and the IU president by how well they succeed in persuading legislators to increase state support for the university?

A: The trustees aren't and shouldn't be focused on day-to-day operations of the university. Successful leadership could be judged by whether student enrollments are increasing, how well students are learning, whether they are graduating and at what level of attainment, what distinctions they go on to gather, how third-party funders view us, and whether IU is a good place to work, reflecting best practices. As the fourth largest employers in the state of Indiana, it behooves IU to try to model best practices. Of course, what we can do is affected by state-level decisions about state priorities—whether to prioritize higher education or more prisons, and so forth.

Q: Whom have the trustees and the IU administration been listening to on the outsourcing issue? Have any oppositional voices been invited to supply information and perspective, and were they listened to? What are tangible signs that the trustees listened to the concerns about the effect of outsourcing on local salaries and benefits, as ex-



I.U. Trustee Patrick A. Shoulders

pressed by Bloomington's mayor, city council, county commissioners and three state legislators?

A: Oppositional voices weren't invited to inform the trustees because we focus on policy, not on day-to-day operational details. We all did receive hard-copy and e-mail copy of the letters from local elected officials though.

Q: Privatizing campus jobs decreases IU's control over campus security because the university cedes control over whether and how well private employers do background checks and re-checks on their employees. Have the trustees discussed the connections between campus security and privatizing campus jobs?

A: That's an interesting question. I don't recall any conversation about the matter among the trustees, only conversation about the faculty response to background checks on faculty. The contracts with private employers are published, and I'd expect the issue of background checks would be covered in those contractual arrangements.

Q: IU has not required bidders for outsourced campus jobs to have an inclusive nondiscrimination policy or to provide domestic-partner benefits. Do you think this retreat from nondiscrimination protections and equal pay for equal work is acceptable?

A: From my *(continued on next page)*

Labor Issues and Candidates for Governor

Jill Long Thompson: “I will lead with a clear understanding of the difference between investing and mere spending. I know the difference between investing and outsourcing. And I will never confuse investing with privatization. For 16 years, the incumbent governor’s predecessors all managed to keep the state going strong without resorting to pillaging the state’s wealth.” (Source: www.hoosiersforjill.com/page/content/announce/)

Unions endorsing **Jim Schellinger:** www.jimschellinger.com/2007/07/endorsements_1.php. AFCSME 62’s endorsement of Jim Schellinger: www.jimschellinger.com/2007/06/afscme_members.php

Brian Howey’s question for Democratic gubernatorial candidates: “Democratic governors have been outsourcing for almost half a century, why is it now a bad thing?” For their answers, see: www.journalreview.com/articles/2007/08/12/viewpoints/02howey.txt

Gov. Mitch Daniels on his job-creation accomplishments: www.mymanmitch.com/aimhigheraccomplishments.asp

Shoulders

(continued from previous page)

own philosophical perspective, it’s not acceptable for IU or for employment relations writ large. With a \$2 billion budget, IU is not going to be able to impose its values on everyone in its purchasing arrangements. But the closer those arrangements get to campus in terms of on-campus employment, the more important it becomes to affirm nondiscrimination. In my opinion, nondiscrimination and equitable benefits should be required for companies bidding for on-campus staff jobs.

Q: Three gubernatorial appointees to the board of trustees are publicly campaigning now for the re-election of Gov. Mitch Daniels. Do you think this politicization of the trustees is appropriate?

A: When the Indiana legislature set up the board of trustees in the 19th century, it decided that six of the nine trustees would be appointed by the governor. Structurally, we’re creations of the political party of the governor in power at any particular moment. Politics have always affected the makeup of the board. I’d guess that more than 90% of gubernatorial appointees in the past have been contributors to a particular governor’s campaign.

Q: Especially given IU’s life-sciences initiative, do you think there is a significant danger that the trustees have become or will become subject to conflicts of interest?

A: I haven’t seen it. There are safeguards against conflicts of interest now—statutory requirements to file conflict-of-interest reports with the state. My observation is that serving on the

board typically involves an investment of time that entails a sacrifice of income.

Q: Do you think the bylaws should be amended to include a revolving-door prohibition for student trustees, so their votes do not have the appearance of being influenced by future employment opportunities?

A: That possibility has never occurred to me. Over the years, I haven’t observed a problem.

Q: Would you like to add anything about the outsourcing issue?

A: I’m a lawyer. What I do for a living is to deal with conflict, oftentimes with well-intended deals gone bad. As a trustee, I like to think about the potential problems of our policy decisions from that perspective. What concerns me, philosophically, is the potential for conflict between a for-profit motive and a purely teaching/learning/research mission. By definition, outsourcing to business is for generating a profit, but IU at its core is not about generating economic profit. It’s about generating value for students and the world through the transmission of knowledge. I hope—in the near term

and the long term—that those two motives won’t conflict.

For some background on Patrick *Shoulders*, visit <http://www.indiana.edu/~trustees/bios.shtml#shoulders>

CWA 4730 President Peter Kaczmarczyk had the following to say concerning Shoulders answer to the fifth question he was asked in the interview at left: “President McRobbie did use the excuse of ‘protocol’ in his refusals to meet with our coalition. However, he was clearly misapplying the protocol because we were not asking for a meeting between McRobbie and the union (CWA). Rather we wanted to have members of our coalition representing city and county government, the community at large, and faculty, as well as the staff unions, meet with President McRobbie. The protocol cited by McRobbie, that he does not deal directly with union issues, is misapplied in this case, leaving us to conclude that McRobbie’s interest in creating a transparent administration only extends to areas where he wants it to and is far more limited than he would like people to believe.”

Endorsements (continued from Page 1)

- Ellettsville Town Council Ward 2: Frank Buczolich

Endorsements were not issued for the remaining contested races for lack of sufficient information to make a fair judgment.

Questionnaires produced by other area groups shed light on candidates’ views about other labor issues, including job growth (www.chamberbloomington.org/election.html) and an Equal Benefits Ordinance (www.bloomingtonbeacon.org/article/39).

“Voting is a right we have in this country but is one that is denied to so many people in other countries,” says Yenna. “Do not take the right to vote lightly. The White River Central Labor Council encourages you to vote for the candidate of your choice on November 6.”

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Writer Barbara Ehrenreich was the recipient of the Eugene V. Debs Award on October 6th. Presenting the award is Noel Beasley, Executive Vice President of the Debs Foundation. More information about Debs and the Debs Foundation can be found at www.eugenevdebs.com.

The Labor Connection Submission Policy

Any member of a union affiliated with White River Central Labor Council may submit content (upcoming events, ongoing workplace developments, special recognition of union members or labor advocates, political or topical cartoons) for publication. Submission must be authorized by your local's president or business agent or his/her designee.

To submit content, please e-mail the following to connect@whiteriverclc.org:

- Text and/or digital photograph with caption. (Captions should include name(s) of person(s) in the photo.)
- Your name, union affiliation, and personal phone number

A labor council representative will contact you with any questions about your submission, if needed. The Labor Council reserves the right to edit submissions.

Employee Free Choice Act

“The Employee Free Choice Act would reform the nation’s basic labor laws by requiring employers to recognize a union after a majority of workers sign cards authorizing union representation. It also would provide mediation and arbitration for first-contract disputes and establish stronger penalties for violation of the rights of workers seeking to form unions or negotiate first contracts....

“Some 60 million U.S. workers say they would join a union if they could, based on research conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates in December 2006. But when workers try to gain a voice on the job by forming a union, employers routinely respond with intimidation, harassment and retaliation.

“During union election campaigns, management routinely coerces employees to convince them not to choose un-

ion representation. According to a survey of National Labor Relations Board election campaigns in 1998 and 1999 by Cornell University scholar Kate Bronfenbrenner, private-sector employers illegally fire employees for union activity in at least 25 percent of all efforts to join a union.

“Employees not fired fear losing their jobs if they support union representation. According to the Bronfenbrenner survey, management forces employees to attend group anti-union presentations in 92 percent of all union campaigns. Brent Garren, senior associate counsel for UNITE HERE, told a House subcommittee this past September that 79 percent of workers agreed workers are ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ likely to be fired for trying to form a union.” (From: www.aflcio.org/joinaunion/voicework/efca/57million.cfm)