



## WEEK IN ACTION!

Weekly News From Your Union ~ August 17 – August 24, 2018

Your union's weekly newsletter, *Week In Action*, is emailed every Friday afternoon. *Week In Action* is the best way to stay up to date with weekly VSEA news!

➤ Subscribe to *Week In Action* Online: [www.vsea.org/wia](http://www.vsea.org/wia)

### ***Week In Action* Not Publishing Next Week.**

VSEA's *Week In Action* will return to your email inboxes on Thursday, September 6; one day earlier than usual, due to Council and Annual meetings the following two days.

Have a safe and happy Labor Day!

### **2018 VSEA Annual Meeting WARN Emailed & Now Online**

All VSEA members and retirees should have received an email on August 23 from headquarters that included a link to view the 2018 VSEA Annual Meeting WARN, or the annual publication containing the Annual Meeting main agenda, Unit meeting agendas, the FY2019 operations budget proposal, proposed bylaw changes to be voted on at the meeting and other relevant announcements.

VSEA is requesting that all members and retirees who are attending this year's Annual Meeting on September 8 at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Montpelier please print out this publication and bring it with you to the meeting. VSEA will have a limited number of publications on hand but, if you are able, please print it out on your end. Thanks in advance!

**Very important!** Your Annual Meeting WARN was sent to the primary email address that VSEA currently has on file for you. **If you do not recall receiving an email from VSEA headquarters on August 23, please look in your "Other" or "Spam" folders before contacting headquarters to request a copy.** [You can update your contact information here anytime.](#) You can also link to the online WARN **here**.

### **ALERT! VSEA 2018 General Election Gubernatorial Straw Poll Being Emailed Monday To Members & Retirees!**

In order to provide your VSEA Board of Trustees with better insight on how VSEA members and retirees feel about the candidates running for Governor in the 2018 general election, your union's Legislative Committee is conducting an electronic straw poll, which will be emailed to members and retirees on Monday, August 27. The Board of Trustees governs VSEA's political process, so input to the body from as many members as possible is very important.

Again, VSEA's electronic general-election straw poll is being emailed to VSEA members' and retirees' home email addresses on Monday, August 27. The email

with the poll will have a subject line that reads: **"VSEA 2018 General Election Straw Poll."**

IMPORTANT!! In order for a member **or retiree** to participate in future straw polls, VSEA must have an updated **HOME** email address for the member **or retiree**. VSEA cannot send emails of a political nature, such as the straw poll announcement, to state email addresses. If you are unsure, or don't remember ever providing VSEA with your most up-to-date home email, please take time today to submit your name and home email address to [VSEA@VSEA.org](mailto:VSEA@VSEA.org) (please write "Home Email" in the subject space)

## **Complete Summary Of Changes Made To NMU, Corrections & Supervisory Units' Contract**

WIA is apologizing to members and retirees who thought last week's summary of what happened in contract mediation was a complete list of all the changes made to your contract in this bargaining session. It was not. Last week's WIA story was just listing the modifications agreed to in mediation.

To view VSEA Labor Relations Director Gary Hoadley's comprehensive overview of all the changes made to the contracts covering VSEA members in the Non-Management, Corrections and Supervisory Units, please [click here](#).

Note: Members with specific questions about the new contract should contact a [Steward](#) or a [Union Representative](#).

## **VSEA Council Hosting September 7 Open House & Barbeque!**

The VSEA Council is hosting an Open House and BBQ at VSEA HQ for all VSEA members and your families on Friday, September 7, following the conclusion of the Council's official meeting.

BBQ being catered by a Springfield Chapter member! Free food and adult beverages! Bring a lawn chair!

VSEA Council Open House & BBQ  
Friday, September 7  
5:00 p.m.  
VSEA Headquarters  
155 State Street  
Montpelier

**Important! Please RSVP for the BBQ by Friday, August 31.** RSVP to VSEA Administrative Assistant Susan DeVoid by email at [sdevoid@vsea.org](mailto:sdevoid@vsea.org) or by phone at 802-223-5247.

## **Council Being Emailed Policies**

All VSEA Council members we be emailed a complete packet of VSEA policies early next week, as promised. Please keep an eye open for the email and save the policies somewhere you can access them easily, when needed.

## **VSEA Posts Third In Short Video Series, Titled “Why I’m Sticking With My Union”**

At the direction of the Board of Trustees, VSEA’s Communications Department is providing a new visual education piece for members and retirees to share with anyone who is on the fence about their union, post *Janus* ruling. The third installment of the “Why I’m Sticking With My Union” video clips features DVHA Programs and Operations Auditor Sawyer Joecks, sharing why he is sticking with his union. Additional clips will post soon.

Video 3: Why I’m Sticking With My Union – Sawyer Joecks

Any VSEA member interested in appearing in a future video can send an email to [vsea@vsea.org](mailto:vsea@vsea.org) and write “I’m Sticking With My Union” in the subject line. And if you decide you want to sit down for a few minutes to share your thoughts with your union brothers and sisters, VSEA thanks you in advance.

## **Register Online Today To Attend VSEA’s 2018 Annual Meeting**

This year’s Annual Meeting promises to be a busy one, with *Janus* decision fallout, possible implementation of the State’s new health care copays on January 1, ongoing safety and health issues statewide, privatization of services and a host of other issues weighing heavy. **To save some money, the VSEA Board decided months ago that this year’s meeting would be just a one-day affair, as opposed to the historic two-day meetings of years past.**

Book the date!

VSEA Annual Meeting 2018

Saturday, September 8

Capitol Plaza Hotel, Montpelier

[Register Online](#)

## **VSEA Announces November Bus Trip To Foxwoods Casino!**

The VSEA Membership Recruitment Committee is pleased to announce a November Foxwoods Casino trip with a two-night stay.

### **Dates:**

November 30 to December 2, 2018

### **Bus Cost:**

\$68 per person

Bus will depart from Waterbury at 12:00 p.m. and a location to be determined at 1:00 p.m.

### **Lodging (Two Nights/Two Trees Inn):**

\$248/single occupancy

\$138 per person/double occupancy

\$122 per person/triple occupancy

### **Included Bonuses:**

Baggage handling;

(2) \$10 food credit or full Festival Buffet;  
\$5 food credit or full Breakfast Buffet; and  
\$20 slot play.

### **Questions?**

Please contact VSEA Union Rep Bob South ([bsouth@vsea.org](mailto:bsouth@vsea.org)) or Administrative Assistant Sue DeVoid ([sdevoid@vsea.org](mailto:sdevoid@vsea.org)). Each can be reached by phone at **802-223-5247**.

### **Register For VSEA's Trip To Foxwoods Casino Here:**

#### **Important Information!**

*Payment must be received within one week of registering or you will lose your spot. Cash, check and credit card payments accepted. To pay, please contact VSEA Union Representative Bob South by email ([bsouth@vsea.org](mailto:bsouth@vsea.org)) or phone 802-223-5247. Thank You!*

### **New Contract Printing Can Move Forward Now**

VSEA members continue to inquire to headquarters about the status of the new NMU, Supervisory and Corrections' contracts and where they can find them online to review and understand.

To date, the contract the VLRB ruled in favor of has not been printed or posted because, as many VSEA members and retirees know, VSEA and the State just completed VLRB-requested mediation last week. But now that mediation has concluded, and an agreement has been reached and the VLRB has approved it, it should pave the way for the new contracts to be printed and posted soon.

In the interim, members with specific questions about the new contract should contact a [Steward](#) or a [Union Representative](#).

### **Upcoming Chapter Annual Meetings**

#### **White River Junction Chapter**

Tuesday, August 28  
4:30 p.m.  
WRJ State Office Building  
118 Prospect Street  
First-Floor Conference Room  
White River Junction

Questions: Questions: Contact VSEA Organizer David Oppenheimer at [doppenheimer@vsea.org](mailto:doppenheimer@vsea.org)

#### **Rutland Chapter**

Thursday, August 30  
6:00 p.m.  
Ground Round  
559 U.S. Route 7  
Rutland

Questions: Contact Rutland Chapter President Matt Jakubowski at [firebeevt@yahoo.com](mailto:firebeevt@yahoo.com)

### **Lamoille Valley Chapter**

Thursday, August 30  
11:55 a.m.  
State Office Building  
Large AHS Conference Room  
63 Professional Dr.  
Morrisville

**Questions:** Lamoille Valley Chapter President Aimee Towne at [atowne@vsea.org](mailto:atowne@vsea.org)

### **Upcoming Member Appreciation Day Event**

#### **White River Junction, State Office Building**

Tuesday, August 28  
11:00 p.m.  
WRJ State Office Building  
118 Prospect Street  
Room 170  
White River Junction

Questions: Contact VSEA Organizer David Oppenheimer at [doppenheimer@vsea.org](mailto:doppenheimer@vsea.org)

### **VT State Colleges And Faculty Union Declare Contract Impasse**

[VT Digger reports on August 21](#) that the Vermont State Colleges and its faculty union reached contract impasse this week and will be meeting with a mediator to see if she or he is able to facilitate a deal between the two parties.

According to the union, the VSC Faculty Federation, contract proposals put on the table by the VSC administration actually amount to a pay cut in the form of reduced benefits, increased workload expectations and weakened job security.

In a statement about the impasse, VSC Faculty Federation President Lisa Cline says, "We do not believe that these spending priorities are in the best interest of our students or our institutions," "As faculty of the VSC, we want to ensure that our colleges remain a source of high-quality, affordable higher education for Vermonters."

"The union says its analysis of the VSC's budget reveals that administrative spending with the state college system is more than twice as high as administrative spending at peer institutions."

Note: WIA will be following these negotiations closely, as VSEA represents hundreds of VSC workers on campuses across Vermont.

## UVM Nurses Ramp Up The Pressure On Management

UVM nurses took their fight for a fair contract and safe staffing levels to the Green Mountain Care Board this week, asking the Board not to approve management's proposed FY2019 budget until an agreement is reached with the nurses.

From [an August 22 Seven Days story](#):

*"Nurses picketed on the steps of [Burlington] City Hall for an hour leading up to the hearing. Hospital officials trickled into the building as a protester with a bullhorn led chants of "Safe staffing saves lives" and "Overworked and underpaid." There was no sign of hospital CEO and president John Brumsted; picketers speculated that he was able to slip in via a side door.*

*"Today is about raising public awareness about where the hospital's priorities are," says nurse Mary Knowles, noting that administrators say high salaries are necessary to attract qualified candidates. "Nurses would like to see that logic extended to front-line services," she adds.*

Board Chairperson Kevin Mullin tells the paper that the body will likely not delay its vote, saying, "potential changes in nurses' salaries shouldn't affect the Board's decision."

Related: [Amid Labor Dispute, UVM Medical Presents \\$1.3 Billion Budget](#)

## More Proof That The Decline Of Unions Is Adversely Hurting Workers' Paychecks

[MarketWatch reports on August 23](#) that a new study by an Illinois Sociology Professor found that if labor unions had a stronger presence in the workplace, all workers would see bigger paychecks and better employee benefits. "He calculated just how much wages may be adversely affected: Nonunion workers would have seen 3% to 7% higher wage growth during their careers if U.S. labor unions were still strong."

"The bottom line is that paychecks would probably be bigger, and paychecks would probably be more secure and reliable, if unions hadn't declined over time," writes the professor.

## A Quarter Of America's Private-Sector Workers Get Zero Time Off. Got Union?

The [New York Post published a story on August 16](#) that reports on a recent study by the Center for Economic and Policy Research, which found that the United States is now the only "economically advanced" country in which the "government doesn't guarantee workers receive time off." According to the story, this means **25 percent of America's private-sector workers get no time off at all.**

From the story:

*Meanwhile, more than 35 paid days off are allotted to workers in France, the UK and Spain, according to a chart compiled by [Statista](#) with data from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. Other countries like*

*Chile and South Korea give 30 days of annual leave and public holidays, while Canada, Israel, Japan and Australia give workers between 19 and 28 days.*

*And while most of the other countries studied gave at least some guaranteed paid holidays off to workers, Americans get none. For example, countries like Austria, Portugal and Italy guarantee 13 paid holidays off for workers, in addition to multiple days of paid time off to take as needed.*

## **Teacher Strikes Open Door To Voters Getting A Say On State Education Funding**

[\*Governing\* posted a story on August 24](#) that reports that voters in three states where there were teacher strikes this year would now get to vote on future state education funding, primarily because of the awareness the strikes created.

From the story:

*Arizona, Colorado and Oklahoma all have ballot measures on education funding and saw teacher walkouts this year. According to a [new poll by the journal Education Next](#), nearly two out of every three respondents in those states, and others with teacher strikes, favor raising teacher pay -- a 16-point jump since last year. Nationally, about half of respondents support increasing teacher pay, the second-highest it has been in the survey's 12-year history.*

*"The teacher strikes indicate the kind of energy there is around education," says Michael Leachman, senior director of state fiscal research for the progressive-leaning Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. "To me, it also connects to the cracks that have opened up in the tax-cut narrative that has dominated in these states."*

## **Writer: Social Media Isn't A Social Safety Net**

In [an August 23 piece in the LA Times](#), writer Ann Friedman uses the story of schoolteacher Robert Goodman (who took to social media to solicit sick days from his colleagues so he could complete his chemotherapy) and how his story—heartwarming as it is—should not be allowed to become the norm, writing:

*Goodman's colleagues are part of a trend, of sorts. Last month, "Good Morning America" highlighted a fashionable new baby-shower gift: donated time off for mothers whose jobs don't provide paid maternity leave.*

*While these may seem like inspirational tales about human generosity, they're both more and less than that. The stories reveal the holes in America's safety net: When social policy fails us, social media is now the primary recourse. And the problem extends beyond healthcare or paid leave to other basic functions that our government should guarantee, but does not, creating a gap that individuals and private entities fill on an ad hoc basis.*

*It's not hard to find the systemic failure behind the hashtag.*



## Why We Celebrate Labor Day

[A story posted August 20 to \*The Street\*](#) provides a quick overview of why Americans celebrate Labor Day, and it's worth a read.

Here are some excerpts:

*"From mail room attendant to coal miners to office secretaries and more, the story of Labor Day is not only one of celebration, but of bloodshed and sacrifice, as well, as those workers from generations past paid a steep price for advancing the cause of labor for generations to come."*

*"If you work at a job that offers good pay, solid health and wellness benefits, a growing retirement plan, reasonable hours, and upward mobility, give special thanks on Labor Day to those workers who came before them for the rights of all workers (and risked bloodshed to do so), and paved the way for better workplace conditions for all Americans."*

The story also contains a section of little-known facts about the Labor Day holiday, including, "During the first recorded Labor Day celebration in New York City in 1882, 20,000 people were in attendance, many of them quaffing beer, according to historians - but workers had to give up a day's pay to attend the festivities."

### Upcoming Meetings/Events/Holidays:

#### **August 28**

Deadline To Register To Attend 2018 Annual Meeting!

[Register Here](#)

#### **August 28**

Member Appreciation Day Event: White River Junction

WRJ State Office Building

118 Prospect Street

Room 170

White River Junction

11:00 a.m.

#### **August 28**

White River Junction Chapter Annual Meeting

WRJ State Office Building

118 Prospect Street

First-Floor Conference Room

White River Junction

4:30 p.m.

#### **August 30**

Lamoille Valley Chapter Annual Meeting

State Office Building

Large AHS Conference Room

63 Professional Dr.

Morrisville

11:55 a.m.



## **August 30**

Rutland Chapter Annual Meeting  
Ground Round  
559 U.S. Route 7  
Rutland  
4:30 p.m.

## **August 31**

Deadline To RSVP For Sept. 7 Council Open House & BBQ  
[RSVP Here](#)

## **September 3**

Labor Day Holiday  
Most State Offices & VSEA Closed

## **September 6**

Board Of Trustees' Meeting  
VSEA HQ  
155 State Street  
Montpelier  
9:30 a.m.

## **September 7**

Council Meeting  
Capitol Plaza Hotel  
100 State Street  
Montpelier  
9:00 a.m.

## **September 7**

VSEA Open House & Barbeque  
All Members & Their Families Invited!  
VSEA HQ  
155 State Street  
Montpelier  
5:00 p.m.

## **September 8**

74<sup>th</sup> VSEA Annual Meeting  
Capitol Plaza Hotel  
Governor's Ballroom  
100 State Street  
Montpelier  
9:00 a.m.