

# Strike

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representatives say company officials ignored their demands and fired 200 striking workers, some of whom were reinstated shortly after the strike began.

Price said the demands are illegal and the workers were temporary — the season dictates the end of their jobs. Price also claims the FAT has targeted his company because it is U.S. owned and because it is not the will of the workers to organize.

"We have a good work force with good people," Price said.

Robin Alexander is director of international labor affairs for United Electric, which works in close solidarity with the FAT for worker's rights. She went to Mexico in July, and workers told her that when they were fired their credentials were taken away.

Alexander said that if there is already a union in place, workers who want to elect another union must propose an alternate contract and have an election. If the new union wins they must follow the old contract, which usu-

ally lasts for two years, and renegotiate when it expires.

If no union exists, workers who wish to form one can file a proposed contract and go straight to negotiation, Alexander said.

But workers at the CRISA approached the situation as though there were no union, because in their eyes there was not one. For this reason their proposal was rejected by the Mexican labor board. "I hadn't seen or signed anything," Lara said of the so-called preexisting union.

Price does not acknowledge the strike and said disgruntled workers, controlled by the FAT, are unfairly targeting his company. My family "was there before the FAT existed."

But to Lara the strike is more than real.

Price has filed a criminal indictment against the striking workers alleging violence and that workers obstructed non-striking workers from entering the plant.

"They say we will have to go to jail if we don't take back the demands, but our demands are reasonable," Lara said. "If I have to die for it, I will die."

# Services

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difficult, and we try to let victims know that," Fiskio said.

After a victim files a report with police, officers typically interview the victim, recommend a victims' advocacy group and, in cases where the assault occurred in the past 72 hours, suggest the victim take a sexual assault examination.

The exams, administered only with police permission, are conducted at a hospital typically by one nurse. Exam results are then handed over to the police.

"The exam isn't fun," Nancy Falko, a registered nurse at Sacred Heart Medical Center, said. "It feels to many women like another invasion."

Nonetheless, Falko recommends all victims take the exams to acquire the vital evidence against their attackers.

"Everyone should have evidence collected because rape is not a crime of sex. It's a crime of violence," she said.

After interviewing a victim and recommending sexual assault examinations, police interview suspects and possible witnesses and begin gathering evidence.

If police feel they have a strong case against an alleged attacker, all evidence and testimony is turned over to the District Attorney's office. The office then assigns a seven-member grand jury of citizens to review the case. If the grand jury indicts an alleged offender, a judge formally charges the suspect of the crime.

At arraignment, the accused person either pleads innocent or guilty, and the case goes on to either trial or plea bargaining.

During the investigation and trial, victims have to speak several times with detectives, possibly answer questions for the grand jury or appear in court. At any point in the investigation or during the grand jury review, the case could be dropped for lack of

## Supportive tips

- **Believe what victims tell you** and be supportive.
- **Never ask questions** that may blame the survivor for the assault.
- **Listen when they talk.** Make them feel comfortable when expressing feelings.
- **Validate their feelings** and reassure them that what they did to survive was right.
- **They may experience self-blame.** Let them know they did not deserve to be assaulted.
- **Do not be judgmental.** Counteract blaming statements.
- **Don't interrogate victims.** They may not feel comfortable talking about the assault.
- **Recognize their right** to talk about the assault whenever needed.
- **Support the decisions** they make about talking to police.
- **Let them know** the importance of seeking medical attention.
- **Build a strong support network.** Get support for yourself when you need it.

SOURCE: Sexual Assault Support Services

evidence.

The whole process often takes as long as a year, Gutierrez said.

"When the case is rejected, it can be very invalidating," Gutierrez said. "Victims feel pretty helpless, and they don't always feel good about the outcome."

"What impacts victims the most isn't the incident but that they aren't believed, they aren't given a chance to grieve or they can't have access to support. It impacts the rest of your life," she said.

EPD spokesman David Poppe, however, said most victims feel vindicated when their attackers are brought to justice.

"There's some closure for the victim that they wouldn't have if they didn't pursue the case," he said.

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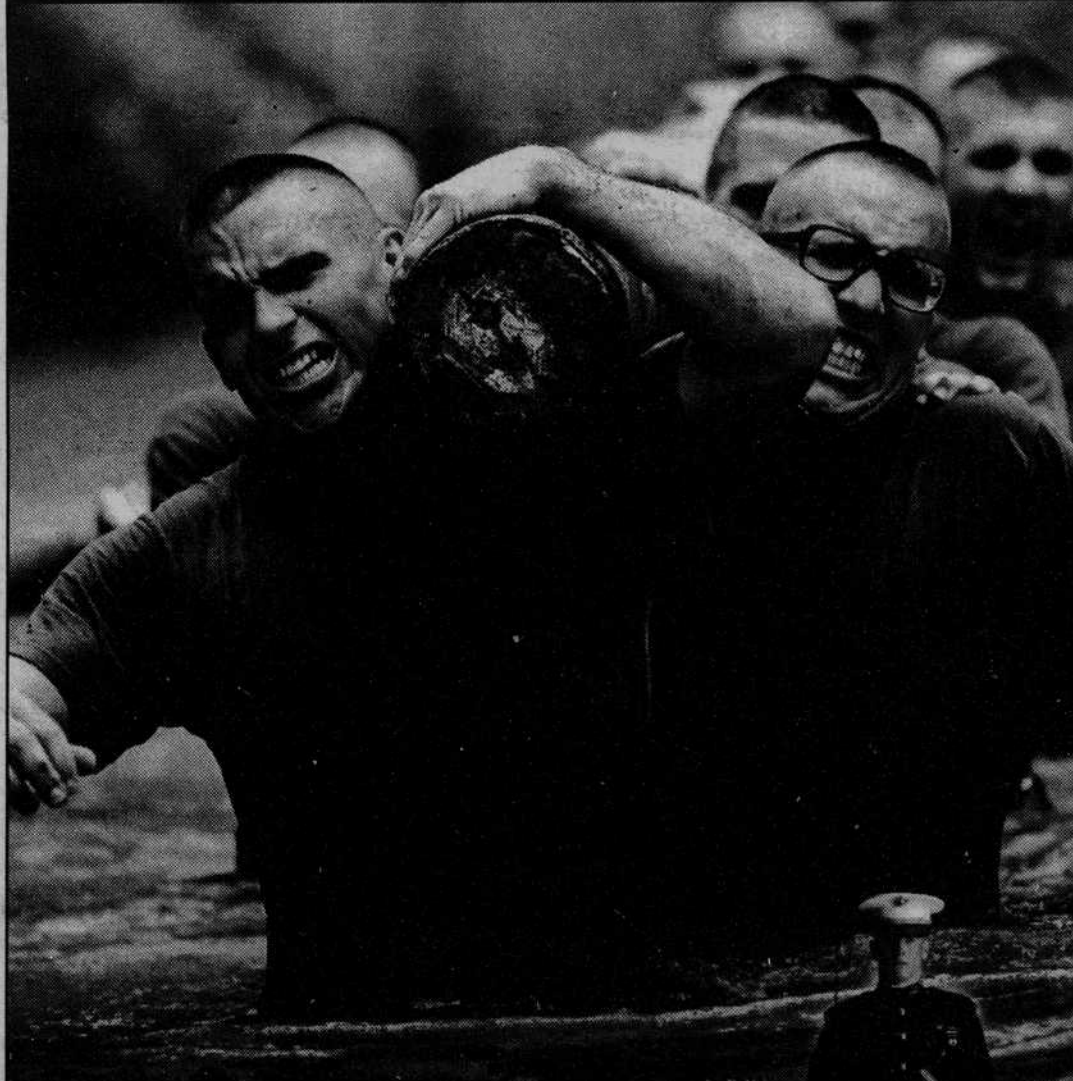


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## Calendar

**Thursday, March 2**

**Discussion on charter schools and school choice** by Clint Bolick, Vice President and Director of Litigation of the Institute of Justice in Washington, D.C., and a leading advocate of school choice. This program will be held from 3:30 to 5 p.m. in room 141 of the Knight Law School.

See the state's Officer Selection Team today at the EMU from 10:00-2:00 PM or call (541) 758-0835.