

## Coupon-Sharing Program Saving on Grocery Bills

With double-digit inflation continuing year after year, many people question the validity of the old cliché, "A dollar saved is a dollar earned." What few will argue though, is that any money saved on your grocery bill makes more dollars available for other needs.

At the Education Department, OPEU members are saving on their grocery bills. For the past month, these employees have been pooling their grocery coupons for all their colleagues to use.

"We started this program knowing that most people need to do anything they can to save a dime," says Lucille Kokel. "Everyone in the Department is invited to bring in coupons and to use all the coupons they need."



Kokel credits Local 216 president John Havery with getting the program off the ground. But it is Kokel who has put some organization into the exchange.

Each day employees bring coupons to Kokel, she files them according to product type and then during breaks, employees pull as many coupons as their shopping list requires.

Kokel says the program uses all types of coupons, including those which are only good for a few days. She says that these short-term coupons are put into an open box so people will use them right away.

"It's hard to tell just how many people are using the program," Kokel says, "but anyone who doesn't is foolish."

## GOP Plans Early Election Strategy

Republicans are already making a major effort to expand upon the widespread congressional gains they realized in the 1980 elections.

During the past two years, House and Senate Republican campaign committees have outtraced their Democratic counterparts by better than ten to one. Senate GOP members plan to use \$25-million of these funds to unseat their Democratic counterparts whose terms expire in 1982. They predict the party will pick up as many as eight or nine seats.

In the House, Republicans feel they have a good opportunity for major gains due to the 17-seat shift resulting from the 1980 Census. Most of these changes will move congressional seats from traditionally Democratic districts in the Northeast and the Midwest to the Sunbelt states and the West.

House Republicans have put together a nine-member field staff to work with state legislatures to see that House districts are reapportioned to Republican advantage.

Additionally, the National Conservative Political Action Committee, which helped topple House and Senate liberals last November, has targeted some 20 Senators for defeat in 1982. Among them are Democratic Senators Ted Kennedy (Mass.), Don Riegle (Mich.), Howard Metzenbaum (Ohio) and Paul Sarbanes (Md.).

In a related move, House Republicans have approved spending nearly \$20-million on advertising to support President Reagan's budget and tax cuts.

## Democrats Plan 'Grass Roots' Conference

The Oregon Democratic Party's semi-annual Grass Roots Conference will be held May 15-17 on the campus of Oregon College of Education in Monmouth.

U.S. Senator Gary Hart (D-Col.) will be the keynote speaker. Before being elected to the Senate in 1972, Hart served as campaign manager for Presidential candidate George McGovern.

Oregon Democrats have conducted the conference every even year, during the legislature, since 1971. The purpose of the conference is to bring "grass roots" Democrats into contact with elected Democrats, to expand the party by reaching out to interest groups and individuals who feel they have concerns that need to be addressed and to debate issues of vital interest.

A series of workshops on issues ranging from government productivity to civil liberties to energy development will be the central format for the conference.

## Investment Plan Open Period Begins May 15

State employees will be able to enroll in the State's Deferred Compensation Program or may increase their investments in the program beginning May 15.

The program, which enables employees to gain interest rates that are substantially higher than those offered in traditional savings accounts, is open only to state employees and will close on June 30.

Interest earnings for the approximately 2,600 employees enrolled in the program averaged 9.96 percent in 1980. Employees may defer a minimum of \$25 and up to a maximum of 15 percent from each paycheck.

More information is available from payroll and personnel centers or from Nancy Crandall, Deferred Compensation Coordinator, at 378-3156, in Salem.

## Nominations for Officers Due June 20

Nominations for statewide office in OPEU will close at noon, June 20, according to Delbert Bolton, OPEU President.

The General Council's Candidate Search and Nomination Committee will meet at headquarters on June 20 to formally accept the nominations and seconds. The meeting is open to all members.

Candidate nomination forms can be obtained from Candidate Committee members (all Assistant District Directors), Board members and Local presidents.

Statewide offices include president, vice president and secretary-treasurer. Each office is a one-year term.

## Librarians Begin Pay, Sex Study



Combating pay and sex discrimination will be the focus of a new project being funded and staffed by the American Library Association.

Assistance will be given at the local level to library workers who are documenting and challenging both pay and sex discrimination. Particular attention is being focused on gathering information concerning comparable worth—equal pay for work of equal value.

Besides offering assistance at the local level, the project will compile, analyze and publish case histories of library workers' experiences with these types of discrimination and their efforts to circumvent them.

For more information contact Helen Josephine at P.O. Box 246, Berkeley, CA 94701, or call (415) 841-1145.

## Employee May Ask for Steward at Interview

An employee's request for assistance from a union steward in an interview with management, must be honored by management, even if the supervisor believes that no disciplinary action will be taken.

Enforcing a "cease and desist" order against Lennox Industries of Fort Worth, Texas, the U.S.

Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit ruled that a risk of discipline is inherent in any interview in which work-related questions are asked, because discipline may result if the employee surprises management with an answer it finds unsatisfactory or threatening.

The case arose when a Lennox supervisor told an assembly line worker that he wanted to talk to the worker in his office. Since the supervisor had previously criticized the worker for slow work, the worker requested to have a union steward present. The supervisor refused the request.

After heated words were exchanged, the supervisor took the worker to the assembly manager, who accused the worker of instigating a slowdown and again denied the worker's request to have a union steward present.

## Poverty Level Now at \$8,450

The federal government has boosted its official poverty level index for a family of four by \$1,000 to \$8,450, the Labor Department reported last month.

The new figure, which is used by numerous federal agencies in determining income eligibility for programs that assist the poor, reflects increases in consumer prices over the past year.

Under the new guideline, an urban family of four living in the continental United States is considered below the poverty level if its income totals \$8,450 a year or less.

A single-person is considered poor, under the revised guidelines, if his or her income is below \$3,680. That ceiling is \$430 higher than a year earlier.

## Replacement Only Temporary During Strike



When public employees are conducting a legal strike, the employer can still hire replacements on a temporary basis, according to Vince Varnas, an instructor at the University of Oregon Labor Education Research Center (LERC).

However, if management refuses to rehire a legally striking employee whose position was filled by a temporary employee during the job action, "management is guilty of an unfair labor practice," says Varnas.

Varnas made the statement to clarify a portion of an article in the April Oregon Public Employee which said, "hiring replacements (in legal public sector strikes) is grounds for filing an unfair labor practice."