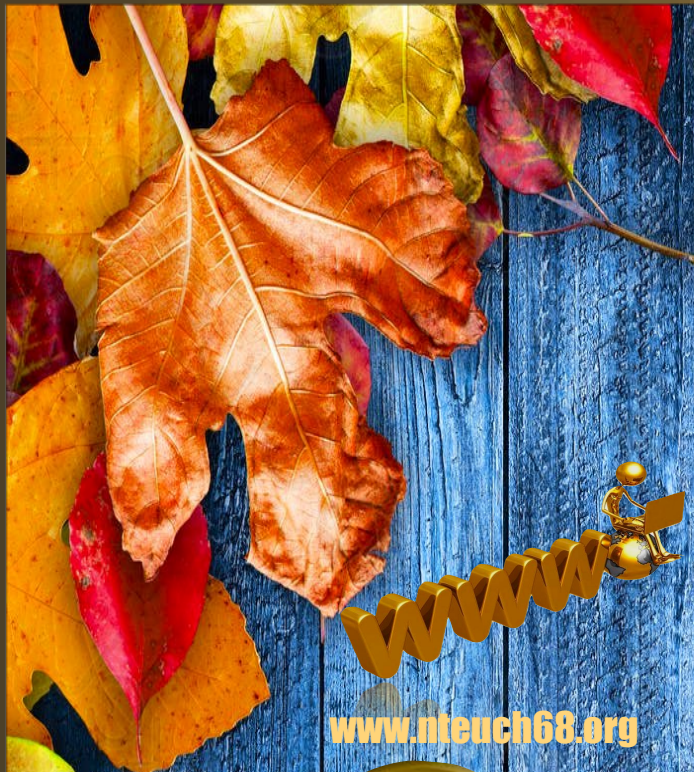


NTEU IS HERE FOR YOU

THE GUARDIAN

HOLIDAY EDITION



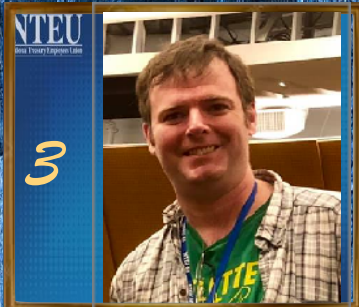
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Desk of the President



N/S Chief Steward's Desk



Legislative Tidings

Inside Edition

- *Desk of the President*..... 2
- *Need Union Rep?*.....3
- *Let's Hear it for Pay Raise!* 4
- *Self-Assessment*.....5
- *Performance Awards*..... 6
- *Thanksgiving Cupcakes*..... 7
- *BJ's Wholesale Membership* 8
- *Checkbook's 2021 Online Guide*.....9
- *United Benefits Open Season Q&A*....10
- *Know Your Officers*..... 11



From the Desk of the President

Hello all!

First, I want to wish each of you a very Happy Thanksgiving! As we continue our “one day at a time” approach we know that the holidays may be different this year than they were in years past. We must balance taking precautions with the desire to be with friends and family. Especially as the virus is coming back as strong, if not stronger than it initially came, we must continue to be vigilant and practice safe measures to protect yourselves, your families and those around us! With that said, NTEU is firmly advocating for employees and management to continue to respect social distancing and mask wearing in the work place. The more we work together, the safer we all will be!

Awards will be coming out soon! Members can feel free to contact me at any time if they want to know if they are eligible for an award and what that award will be! Those who have contacted me have been pleasantly surprised by their awards! As you know there was an increase from 1% of salary to 2% which is a significant increase. That last time we saw awards like this was roughly 2012!

As telework continues, it’s important to remember NTEU is here for you! While we don’t see you anymore every day, we are still working to promote your rights, pay and benefits. We recently saw that the Senate is proposing a 0% pay increase for FY 2021... this is clearly not where we want to be. NTEU will be working day and night with our friends in Congress to make sure that this changes. Federal Employees already lag way behind our private sector counterparts and a 0% pay increase for workers who keep the country running is not fair! NTEU has your back!

Although I hate to even whisper the words, but Federal Employees face yet another government shutdown potentially on December 11. While we work to protect American citizens and do the work of the American people, we all know the volatile situation in DC. To be sure, a funding bill could be passed and we will have nothing to worry about but, it is clearly a real possibility. We likely will not know anything until the first week in December, it’s important to know that this is our next date of concern. Please make sure you update your email address on NTEU.org if you wish to receive vital shutdown information!

In closing, I wish to once again wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving!

Most of all I wish everyone a safe and happy end of 2020...

In solidarity,

Gary Karibian

Weingarten Rights

EMPLOYEE'S RIGHT TO UNION REPRESENTATION



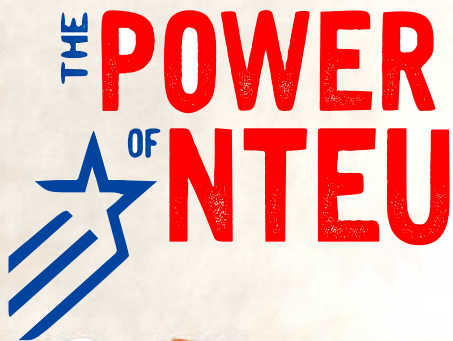
Employee Rights to Union Representation

It's a common belief that an employee has a right to union representation at any meeting with a manager. While we wish we could say this is true, it is not. Management has a right to meet with employees to discuss most non-disciplinary issues without a steward. For example, if a manager is sharing an appraisal with an employee, even if the employee disagrees and wants a steward present, management does not have to agree.

So when and why do you get union representational rights? There are two primary areas in the law that covers this issue. The first is 5 USC 7114 and the second is something called Weingarten Rights. We have all been to 7114 meetings but you probably never knew that the title "7114" comes from the statute that I mentioned. It covers your representational rights. So for example, if you are in a team meeting and your manager is speaking about process issues and the IRM and then changes the subject to how to request leave or discussing your rights under telework or any other contractual item, the manager must request a steward as this falls into a 7114 discussion. This is considered a working condition.

Another area of rights of representation falls under investigatory interviews. Weingarten rights show that if you believe you are being investigated/interviewed by management or any other official and you have a reasonable belief that the interview may lead to discipline, you have a right to request union representation. Article 5 Section 4 goes further than Weingarten. Weingarten puts the onus on the employee to know their rights whereas article 5 Section 4 demands that management inform you of your rights. The onus is still on the employee to request a steward, however, management must inform you of your rights.

NTEU always suggests that if you are ever given representational rights that you take advantage of your membership! Do not go into these meetings thinking they're no big deal. These meetings can lead to discipline including a suspension or removal. If you have the rights of representation, use it! If you have questions don't hesitate to contact the office!



WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my NTEU representative or steward be present at the meeting. Without representation, I chose not to answer any questions."

NTEU WORKING FOR YOU



Shout Out 3.5% Pay Raise 2021!



2020 isn't much fun. So let's talk about our 2021 pay raise instead.

We are facing not only on average of 4.9% percent more for health insurance next year, an unfortunate financial hit. We are already bracing for four months of paying double Social Security taxes because of the mandated deferral imposed on us from September through December.

NTEU advocating for a 3.5% percent pay raise in 2021 under legislation introduced in the House and Senate. A bill introduced to help us be able to pay our bills, invest in our children's education and save for retirement. Members of Congress are fully engaged in the effort to pass this bill into law and give us the ability to keep doing what we love: service the public.

NTEU is fighting for the fair pay raise that we deserve! Now it's up to you! [See What You Can Do!](#)

Visit [NTEU.org](https://www.nteu.org) Action Center Today.

Do not use government computer or email. Use personal email, computer or phone. Must be done on your own time.



ACTION ★ CENTER

Ask your members of Congress to support a fair pay increase for 2021!
Ask Congress >

Give to TEPA **Write Congress**

PERFORMANCE

APPRAISAL

You ever get your appraisal and think, "Wait a minute!"

Now, I know I did better than this!" So, what happened? What did you do that you feel was better than what your manager put on your 6850-BU? Do you remember? Did you write down what you did to contribute to the group? Were you recognized with a time off award or 59 minutes of admin leave? Did you receive a certificate of gratitude? If you can't remember, what makes you think your manager will?

You are the only one who can pat yourself on the back better than anyone else. So why not complete a Self-Assessment?

Self-Assessments help your manager to remember all the wonderful things you have done throughout your performance rating period and how you are an asset to the overall efficiencies of the IRS. So, you want to write one to remind them of your greatness.

How do you do that? Simple: First, save all emails and documentation you receive commending a job well done. If you receive a certificate in the mail, scan that in. Start creating an electronic folder that shows you receiving "kudos" for a job well done throughout your appraisal period.

Next, during the final month of your appraisal period, take the 4 hours allotted to you per National Agreement 2019, Article 12 Section 4.B.6 and write your self-assessment. Start by listing out your CJE's. Next to each CJE, write up how you'd score yourself. If you have examples from any accolades you received during the year, be sure to reference them in the appropriate area. Suggest what you think your rating should be.

Finally, submit your self-assessment to your manager by the last day of your rating period. Now, make sure how you score yourself can be supported, management can reject the assessment.

For more tips on writing your self-assessment search IRS Source Home webpage, type "self appraisal" in the search box and you will find performance appraisal self-Assessment tutorial, Form 13335-performance appraisal self assessment and more.



Protection You Can Count On!



NOTICE

**This Work Area
Is Protected By**

NTEU
The National Treasury Employees Union

NTEU WORKING FOR YOU



Performance Awards Funding Increases

The amount of money to be distributed for the 2020 performance awards will double to 2 percent of the total annual bargaining unit salaries. This is good news and a welcome move from the IRS in recognizing the contributions of employees, particularly in such a tough year. Throughout this pandemic and the IRS-ordered evacuation, bargaining unit employees have stepped up to accomplish the agency's mission while balancing their family needs.

It wasn't that long ago—in 2013—that the IRS attempted to do away with the entire performance awards program. NTEU was able to fight off the agency's efforts and retained the current performance award program.

The NTEU-IRS contract calls for awards to be funded at no less than 1 percent of the total amount of bargaining unit salaries but the IRS is free to increase that figure when it has sufficient funding. The contract also requires pay parity between bargaining unit and non-bargaining unit employees to ensure that the IRS' decision to increase awards funding will equally benefit all employees.

Other changes to the awards program are in place for this year and those adjustments are not as positive. We have previously reported on the changes to the awards pool structure that were imposed by the administration-appointed impasses panel after the IRS ignored NTEU's strong objections and the recommendations of a neutral fact finder.

The new award pool structure eliminates the geographic component to pools and NTEU is concerned that will cause an unfair redistribution of awards from those who would normally be eligible for an award to employees in other parts of the country where there is a higher rating culture. The distribution of awards under this new structure is something NTEU will watch very closely.

The IRS has indicated that it expects awards to be distributed by the end of the year, as called for in our contract. NTEU will share additional information on the distribution as it becomes available.

Not Yet a Member of NTEU? Join Today

NTEU delivers a lot of bang for the buck, and that includes news and information you need as an IRS employee. This newsletter is just one example of the type of information the union provides to its members on a regular basis. **By joining NTEU you will get all our communications and a lot more. Join today!**

Join NTEU ONLINE

**THE POWER
OF NTEU**



Thanksgiving Cupcakes

Kids will gobble these up! Gummy candies, marshmallows, and toasted coconut flakes make excellent facial features and feathers for tiny Thanksgiving "turkeys." Makes 24



Ingredients

- Simple Chocolate Buttercream
- 24 cupcakes, such as One-Bowl Chocolate Cupcakes
- 24 coconut marshmallows
- 48 long chocolate sprinkles
- 1 pound mini gummy fish (144 pieces)
- 12 ounces sweetened shredded coconut, lightly toasted (4 cups)

Directions

- **Step 1**
Use an offset spatula to spread buttercream over cupcakes in a smooth layer.
- **Step 2**
With a wet toothpick, poke two holes in each coconut marshmallow; using kitchen tweezers, insert chocolate sprinkles for eyes. Cut 12 orange gummy fish in half; push one half into each marshmallow for a beak. Press marshmallow heads onto cupcakes. Press 5 more gummy fish into each cupcake to make tail feathers. Sprinkle toasted coconut over cupcakes to cover completely. Decorated cupcakes can be stored up to 1 day at room temperature in airtight containers.



Gary, Beth, Nellie, Rob, Nell, Barbara & Bob



SPECIAL SAVINGS FOR EMPLOYEES OF

NTEU - CHAPTER 68

Special New Member Offers	BJ's PERKS REWARDS® MEMBERSHIP — Just \$50* Save \$60 on a 12-Month BJ's Membership with BJ's Easy Renewal.® Earn 2% cash back on most BJ's purchases**	or	BJ's INNER CIRCLE® MEMBERSHIP — Just \$25* Save \$30 on a 12-Month BJ's Membership with BJ's Easy Renewal
Renewing Member Offers	BJ's PERKS REWARDS® MEMBERSHIP — Just \$80* Save \$30 on a 12-Month BJ's Membership with BJ's Easy Renewal.® Earn 2% cash back on most BJ's purchases**	or	BJ's INNER CIRCLE® MEMBERSHIP — Just \$40* Save \$15 on a 12-Month BJ's Membership with BJ's Easy Renewal

To qualify for this offer, please:

1. Complete this application in full and return it to your Organization Rep at the address below. Please include a check or credit card payment for the full amount.
2. New Members: Your Membership Activation letter will arrive in 3 – 4 weeks. Bring it, along with photo ID, to the Member Services Desk at a Club near you to receive your Membership Card.

Organization Rep: **Send to: Barbara Thomas** Contact Number: _____
 Offer Expires: **Nov 30, 2020** Address: **Barbara.Thomas@irs.gov**

All BJ's Memberships are subject to BJ's current Membership Terms, ask in-Club or go to Bjs.com/terms.

Choose Membership Level: BJ's Inner Circle® Membership \$25 NEW or 3-0 RENEW BJ's Perks Rewards® Membership \$8 NEW or 3-0 RENEW

Current Membership # (if applicable) _____ **THIS OFFER NOT ACCEPTED IN CLUB**

Last Name _____ First Name _____ MI _____ Sex F M

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP Code _____

Phone # _____ Market Code (BJ's use only) **cfontana**

Email _____



If you choose to receive the second Household Membership Card, please complete the following: (Note: Household Cardholder must reside at the same address as the Primary Cardholder.)

Last Name _____ First Name _____ MI _____

Primary Signature — I understand that I am responsible for any checks and actions of the second Cardholder.

Please choose your method of payment. (Sales tax may be added. Make checks payable to BJ's Wholesale Club, Inc.)

Check My BJ's Perks® Mastercard® Mastercard® American Express®

Discover® Network Visa®

Date of Membership Purchase
 _____ / _____ / **2020**
 Month / Day / Year

Credit Card Account # _____ Expiration Date _____ Total Charge _____

BJ's Use Only
 BJ's Sales Representative's Signature: **Cheryl Fontana** Digitally signed by Cheryl Fontana
 DN: cn=Cheryl Fontana, o=Bjs.com, email=cfontana@bjs.com, c=US
 Date: 2019.08.25 11:23:45 -0700' Club # **092**

All applications are sent to our Home Office; processing takes approximately 3 – 4 weeks.

Membership Expiration and Renewals: Your Membership expiration date is the last day of the month and year shown on your register receipts and on your "My Account" page on Bjs.com. Paid Memberships renewed within two months after expiration will be extended 12 months from the expiration date.

*BJ's Inner Circle Membership fee is regularly \$55; BJ's Perks Rewards Membership fee is regularly \$110. Offer is valid in Club only, may not be combined with other offers, not redeemable for cash and nontransferable. Plus sales tax where applicable. Offer is contingent upon your enrolling in BJ's Easy Renewal, and you authorize BJ's to charge the debit/credit card first used at BJ's after accepting this offer, an annual recurring charge in the amount of the then-current Membership fee for all active Memberships on your account, plus tax where applicable, on the first day of the month your Membership expires. **Expires 5/4/19.**

**BJ's Perks Rewards Members earn 2% cash back on most BJ's purchases. Cash back is in the form of electronic Awards issued in \$20 increments that are used at checkout at BJ's and expire 6 months from the date issued. Cash back can be requested in the form of a check prior to Awards expiring by contacting Member Care at 800-BJ'S-CLUB. My BJ's Perks Program is provided by BJ's Wholesale Club, Inc. and its terms may change from time to time. Some exclusions may apply. Visit Bjs.com/perks/terms for Program Terms.

†My BJ's Perks Mastercard credit card is subject to credit approval.

My BJ's Perks Mastercard is issued by Community Capital Bank, pursuant to a license by Mastercard International Incorporated. Mastercard is a registered trademark of Mastercard International Incorporated. ©2019 BJ's Wholesale Club, Inc. 21454820

CHECKBOOK'S 2021 ONLINE GUIDE

to Health Plans for Federal Employees and Retirees

EXCLUSIVELY FOR NTEU MEMBERS!

FEHBP, FSA, AND FEDVIP OPEN SEASON

November 9 – December 14

NTEU is pleased to announce that CHECKBOOK's online Guide to Health Plans for Federal Employees and Annuitants is once again available to NTEU members at no cost. The online guide, found in the member benefits section of www.nteu.org, provides:

- ✓ **Real Cost Comparisons** – Plans are ranked by estimates of actual out-of-pocket costs, providing a real dollars-and-cents comparison.
- ✓ **Get Expert Advice** – Send questions directly to our plan experts.
- ✓ **Dental and Vision Plans** – The guide will evaluate FEDVIP plans available to you.
- ✓ **Premium Conversion** – The guide takes into account the effects of premium conversion in its plan rankings, a significant factor when comparing plan deductibles.

Beginning Nov. 9, NTEU members may access the 2021 Guide online by:

- 1 Visiting the NTEU website, www.nteu.org
- 2 Logging in with your username and password (if you do not have them, you will have the chance to create them)
- 3 From the top-navigation, click on Benefits and then on the Consumers' Checkbook icon

DO YOU NEED A MASK?

Stop by the Union office open daily between 10am-2:30pm. Night Shift email Gary.H.Karibian@irs.gov

Please wear a mask and keep six feet between you and others.

Thanks for doing your part.





UNITED
BENEFITS

Open Season Q&A: Conversations with Paul Thornton

Drop in on Tuesdays
Nov. 17 at 11:00a-1:00p EST
Dec. 1 at 6:00-8:00p EST | Dec. 8 at 11:00a-1:00p EST

Please join us for our **Open Season Q&A: Conversations with Paul Thornton** Live Event. Paul has been helping people with their insurance and retirement needs for over 18 years. He'll be on hand to answer your questions about open season, including questions about:

- The basics of health insurance
- Comparing health insurance plans to find the one that's best for you
- What is the Federal Health Benefits (FEHB) program?
- Reading and understanding health insurance plans
- How FEHB works in retirement and with Medicare

Register for this free event at
www.unitedbenefits.com/nteuopenseason
or scan the QR code.



United Benefits | www.unitedbenefits.com | 866-558-2121

NTEU CHAPTER 68

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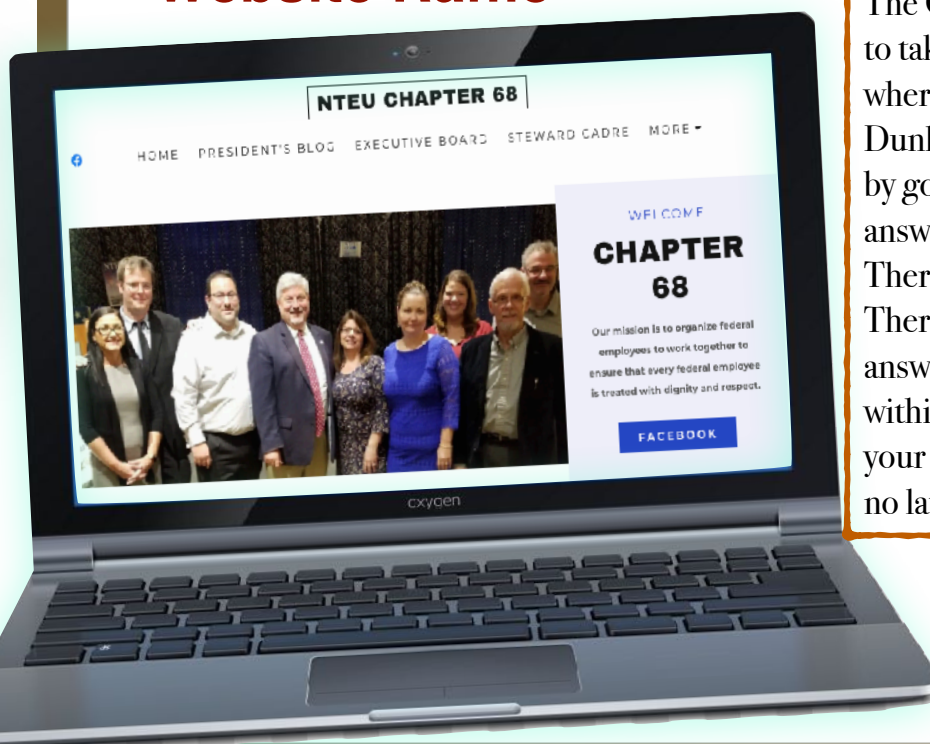
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Mailing Address:

P O BOX 4186 Ballardvale Station

Andover, MA 01810

Website Raffle



The Chapter would like to invite you to take part in our monthly raffle where you can win a \$5 gift card to Dunkin Donuts or a Gas Card simply by going to our website and answering our trivia questions. There will be 5 winners each month. There are only 3 questions and the answers each month can be found within the website! You should send your answers to me (Gary Karibian) no later than the 10th of each month.

www.nteuch68.org