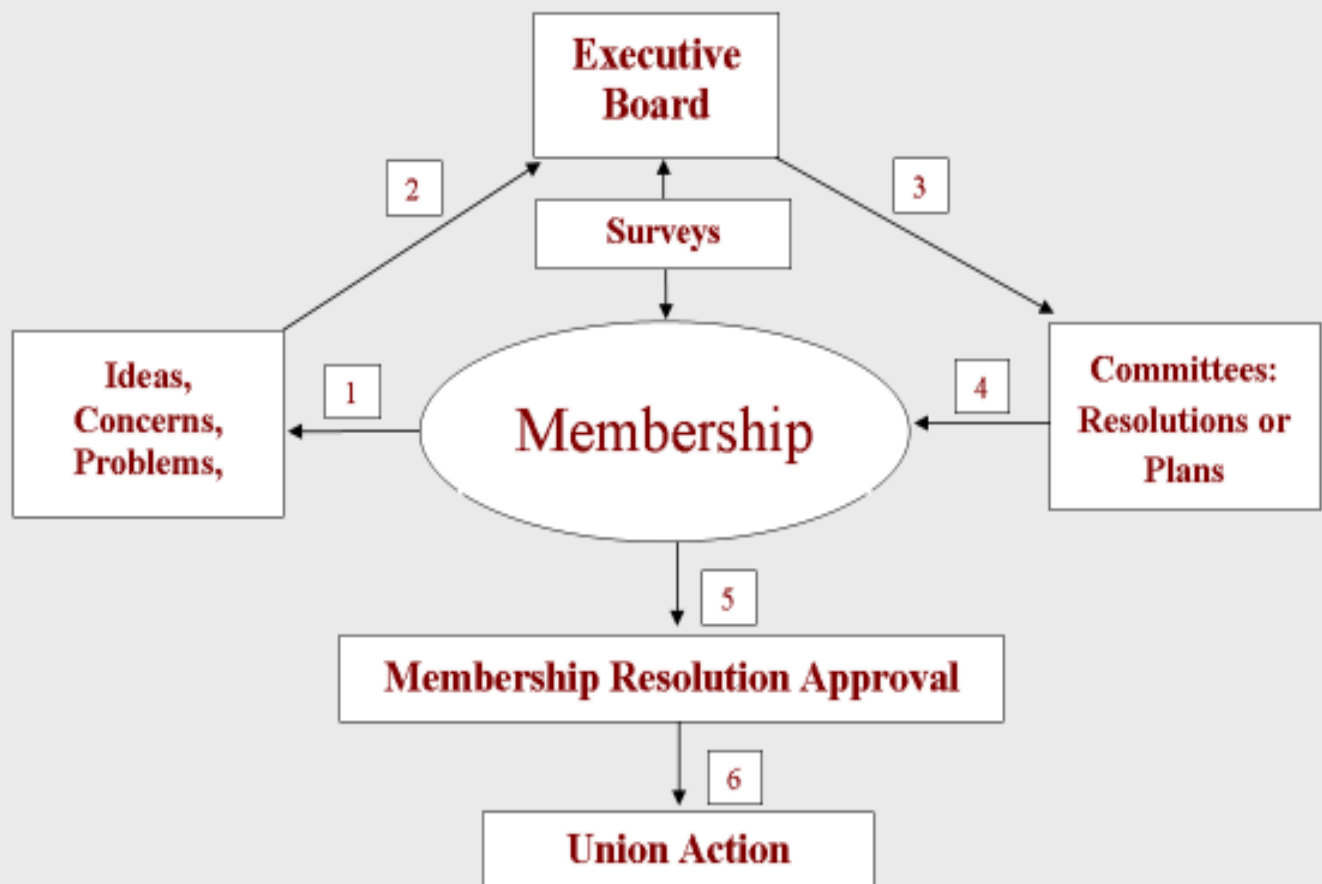




Membership Action Plan Focus: Workplace Health

The November meeting will introduce a new process for suggesting and pursuing change on campus with maximum membership participation. The first topic will be “Workplace Health.” Here is a diagram of the new process.



**Meeting Wednesday, November 3
11 am to Noon in Science 102 (lunch)**

**WCCFT Officers, 2005-2006**

Anne D'Orazio, president
Richard Rosell, vice-president
Joyce McQuade, treasurer
Lynette DeBellis, secretary

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Richard Courage
Carlos Delgado
Carolyn DiLeo, Faculty Development
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126 So. Lexington, White Plains, NY
914-949-8611

Calendar of Events**Monthly Meetings:**

First Wednesday, 11:00 a.m.
Science Building 102

October 22, 26:

Union Members Working Together.
Speakers and Discussions Focusing
on Adjunct Faculty Issues

November 2:

Shared Governance and
Health and Safety at WCC

December 8:

Holiday Celebration

February 2006:

Spring Luncheon

March:

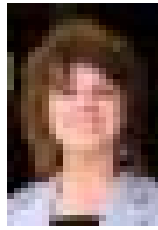
Unions and Globalization

April:

Report of the Watchdogs

May:

Committee Meetings

**President's Message**

Who Cares?

By Anne D'Orazio

Every election, pundits talk about the apathy of the American voter. At meetings, activists decry the lack of interest in important issues. In class, teachers report that students are impervious to pressing problems. Is it true that nobody cares any more? I don't think so.

People are certainly aware of what works and doesn't work in their daily lives. They know when they are in an environment that is pleasing, reassuring and supportive and when, on the other hand, they feel uncomfortable, disgruntled and demoralized.

They usually have no trouble expressing satisfaction if their lives are going well and are capable of articulating complaints when they're not. So why the reluctance to get involved with efforts to change the world (or even just a corner of it) from bad to good?

It seems to me we've lost a sense of having any control over affecting change. Internationally, we're confronted with corporate giants mistreating their employees and we feel overwhelmed. How do we penetrate the board rooms and get them to pay decent wages, stop verbal and sexual abuse of female workers? In the domestic political field, we elect candidates and see no improvements in the funding of education. So we are forced to return

every year to beg for another flat line budget. In our own campus workplaces, we identify health concerns, make suggestions, file the necessary forms and nothing happens. And the mold returns.

Or we meet and make recommendations which are then disregarded. The greater the disconnection between what we see around us and what we can directly effect, the less likely we are to be interested the next time.

We would like to propose a process of addressing issues of concern to union members which

would include identifying a single issue at a time, surveying the membership about that issue, passing an action resolution at a general membership meeting and then proceeding to implement what changes we can. The membership will be involved at all stages of discussion. At the general membership meeting in November, we will be focusing on a healthy and safe work environment. Watch for a questionnaire on your workplace situation.

We care. We have endorsed political candidates and worked actively for their election, we have encouraged discussion of controversial topics and have

taken a stand on academic freedom. We will continue to work on all levels of governance to improve the working conditions of our members.

"We will continue to work on all levels of governance to improve the working conditions of our members."

We Do!

Bulletin:
Don't miss important contract negotiations update at November meeting.

The Costs of War

By Richard Courage



Editor's note: We are currently enmeshed in one of the most devastating demonstrations of what happens when an administration governs unilaterally. In this article, our Richard Courage looks at the escalating costs of a conflict whose toll is coming under increasing scrutiny by left and right alike – one that, as Courage's research shows, has not only an emotional but a financial impact on all of our lives. The Union News invites letters and articles on all issues that affect the allocation of resources for public education.

It all seems grimly familiar: young Americans killed and mutilated in pursuit of dubious foreign policy goals, palpably negative effects on the economic and social fabric, politicians claiming progress while war grinds on with no end in sight.

The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines “cost” as: “1. An amount paid . . . for a purchase. 2. A loss, sacrifice, or penalty.” Both the “amount paid” and the “loss” incurred by the Iraq war come sharply into focus in recent reports from opposite ends of the political spectrum.

The liberal Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) issued “The Iraq Quagmire: The Mounting Costs of War and the Case for Bringing Home the Troops” (<http://www.ips-dc.org/iraq/quagmire>) on August 31. The conservative American Enterprise Institute issued “The Economic Costs of the War in Iraq” (<http://aei-brookings.org/publications/abstract.php?pid=988>) in September.

In tone, methodology, and assumptions, these are very different documents, but take them together, screen for bias, search for a common factual basis, and we learn much about our current impasse.

The IPS report begins, pointedly, with a series of “Vietnam Echoes”:

- According to current estimates, the cost of the Iraq War could exceed \$700 billion.

In current dollars, the Vietnam War cost U.S. taxpayers \$600 billion.

- Operations costs in Iraq are estimated at \$5.6 billion per month in 2005.

By comparison, the average cost of U.S. operations in Vietnam over the eight-year war was \$5.1 billion per month, adjusting for inflation.

- Staying in Iraq and Afghanistan at current levels would nearly double the projected federal budget deficit over the next decade.”

One searches the AEI report in vain for any reference to the specter of Vietnam and finds the war’s “costs” measured against its supposed “benefits.” Nevertheless, AEI’s projected “medium estimate” from March 2003 to March 2015 is \$603 billion. Given the AEI’s interest in choosing lower cost projections and the IPS’ method of lumping

costs from Iraq together with costs from Afghanistan, we could arguably split the difference between AEI’s \$603 billion and IPS’ \$700 billion. Perhaps even more chilling than these astronomical figures is the projected endpoint 2015, based on “Congressional Budget Office estimates regarding the expected additional time U.S. troops will be in Iraq”.

To concretize the cost of war to American taxpayers, the National Priorities Project breaks figures down by state “based on how much each state contributes in tax revenues” and by locality “based on the state costs, . . . relative population and incomes.” To date, the war has cost residents of New York State \$17.2 billion dollars and residents of Westchester \$1.2 billion.

Neither report explores the likely macroeconomic impact of a vastly expanded federal deficit, already at record levels. Massive government borrowing to cover a war-induced deficit crowds private borrowers out of credit markets driving up interest rates across the board. We will pay more for everything from home mortgages to auto and student loans to credit card interest. Businesses facing higher interest rates will be less likely to invest in expanded capacity and hire more workers.

The AEI report measures the war’s costs against ostensible benefits estimating, for example, a \$32 billion savings in costs “avoided” by “no longer enforcing U.N. sanctions” against Iraq. On the most fundamental question, whether this war makes us safer, the IPS authors are categorically negative, quoting General Anthony Zinni, former head of the U.S. Central Command: “The U.S. action in Iraq has failed to stabilize the country, and moreover, has severely damaged America’s reputation in the region and around the world”. They describe increased terrorist recruitment, dangers created by an overstretched military, security costs due to loss of police, firefighters, and EMT personnel in the Guard and Reserves, and secu-

urity threats caused by low U.S. credibility.

The AEI authors are more cautious, concluding that State Department reports “cannot provide enough data to answer the crucial question: would terrorism have been lower or higher without the Iraqi conflict, and what is the change in the future probability of terrorist attacks?”. Their report includes the following table; readers may draw their own conclusions.

Global Terrorist Attacks

Year	# of Attacks	Killed	Wounded
2000	423	405	791
2001	348	4655	1080
2002	199	725	2013
2003	208	625	3646
2004	651	1907	9300

Figures for 2005 can be gleaned from news headlines. These reports suggest a surprising degree of convergence between outraged liberals and worried conservatives.

On May 1, 2003, George W. Bush stood on the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln before a giant banner proclaiming “Mission Accomplished.” He announced the “end of major combat operations” and described “the battle of Iraq” as “one victory in a war on terror.”

In 279 B.C.E., Greek King Pyrrhus of Epirus surveyed the broken, bloody corpses of his bravest warriors. Congratulated on his “victory” over the Romans, Pyrrhus bitterly responded: “One more such victory and we are undone.”



**WESTCHESTER PUTNAM CENTRAL
LABOR BODY (AFL-CIO)
MEET THE CANDIDATES NIGHT
WORKERS' MEMORIAL FUNDRAISER**

On Wednesday, October 19, the Westchester Putnam Central Labor Body held a fundraiser for a permanent Workers' Memorial Monument and invited candidates running for Westchester County legislative and judicial positions. Delegates Anne D'Orazio and Richard Rosell were in attendance to support the Memorial and speak with candidates. The WCCFT has endorsed Tom Abinanti, Jose Alvarado, Lois Bronz, Bill Burton, Andrea Stewart Cousins, Mike Kaplowitz, Judy Myers, Vito Pinto, Marty Rogowski, Bill Ryan, Bernice Spreckman, and Clinton Young for County Legislature.



*The WCCFT has endorsed
ANDY SPANO
For Westchester County Executive*

Be sure to vote on November 8.