



SOLIDARITY

In The Sunshine

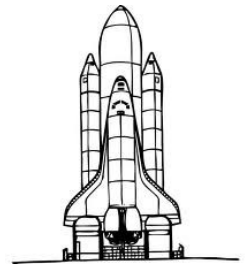
NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA AFL-CIO

July 2011

VOL. XII ISSUE 4

The Adventure Ends...For Now...

On May 1st, 1961, *Freedom 7* carried Alan Shepard on a suborbital flight making him the first American Astronaut to “slip the surly bonds of Earth” and begin our nation’s exploration of humankind’s final frontier. Now, just over fifty years after that historic flight, America’s human spaceflight operations in Florida have come to a close. July will be remembered as the last time the skies over Florida were pierced by the roar of an American Space Shuttle leaving a proud legacy of American triumph, especially that of an American workforce that labored tirelessly with determination, largely unnoticed, to carry the hopes and dreams of not only millions of Americans but people from around our great blue celestial ball, into the heavens. Two generations of Florida’s workers, most proud union members, answered the nation’s call time and time again over these past fifty years to make humankind’s greatest adventure a reality. Now, in spite of the efforts of organized Labor, political leaders and others, that era of exploration and engineering triumph, all the stuff of dreams throughout all of human history, has come to a close.



Now that *Atlantis* has landed back on Earth, after a staggering thirty-three successful missions it will be retired along with the other American Space Shuttles and the entire program. While *Atlantis* will be retired at its home at Kennedy Space Center for future generations to marvel at its wonder, thousands of KSC and other support workers will not be returning to work anytime soon. Over 2,000 workers were laid off the week of its final flight, 1,000 more will lose their jobs in August all part of the estimated 10,000 workers who will be laid off due to the retirement of the Shuttle program. Unfortunately, this is just the tip of the iceberg for the communities in and around Florida’s Space Coast as the ripples of this tragedy reverberate around the state.

The discontinuation of the space shuttle program will have dramatic economic and social effects across Florida, especially Brevard County with thousands of highly skilled and educated workers having to search elsewhere for career opportunities. This affects every working family in Brevard and the surrounding counties. Nothing lasts forever and change is inevitable but the cancelling of this program is particularly troubling. It is not that our nation does not have the resources to continue human spaceflight, it is that many of our leaders have lost the political will for exploration, placing tax cuts for the wealthy, budget busting military operations overseas and the desires of private spaceflight companies over the needs of this proud American endeavor.

Lew Jamison, President of IAM 2601, who himself has lost his job at Kennedy, has been on the front lines of this struggle from the beginning. He said, “We at Kennedy Space Center recognize that what we are experiencing is not unique. We are keenly aware that millions of American workers have been downsized, contracted out, outsourced and generally lost employment to a myriad of circumstances.” While the loss of jobs for his members and all workers at the Cape is primary, it is not the only concern. “What makes the dismantling of the U.S. human spaceflight program a disgrace is the almost certain surrendering of worldwide leadership in a key technological area. The benefits have been instrumental in groundbreaking advances in health care, communications, transportation, metallurgy, astronomy, geographical mapping and environmental awareness, to name just a few. The two greatest technological accomplishments of my lifetime have been landing humans on the moon and the construction of the International Space Station. No investment made by this country has contributed more to the quality of American life than the investment in our space program.”

Jamison also points out the problems associated with no clear direction moving forward in space exploration. “Can America afford to relinquish our leadership position in space? This is the path we are set upon. Most estimate an absence of six to eight years before the U.S. Government returns Americans to space. In the near term, we are left with the prospect of relying on the Russians to ferry our astronauts to the ISS. Meanwhile, taxpayers fund a fledgling commercial space industry with no proven track record and little incentive to risk corporate money. Is this to be our legacy? Most certainly, it will be, unless we convince the Administration and Congress that Americans will accept nothing less than preserving our supremacy in space exploration.”

Cont. on Page 2

There is no way to tell the story of Florida without telling the story about our nation's greatest adventure. The two are interconnected. When the nation called on our workers to land the first person on the moon, we were there. When the country called on us to build the most advanced scientific machine to explore the science of the cosmos with a reusable space craft, we were there. When the world called on Florida's workers to build an outpost for all nations in space, we were there. The people of the world owe a great debt to the workers in Florida who faithfully worked to launch the people and machines of exploration into space. Florida's union members and supporters rallied and campaigned to keep our space program flying but to no avail. We must view this as a temporary set-back. Now it is time for Florida's workers from all walks of life to stand strong with these workers and press our political leaders in Tallahassee and Washington, DC to ensure that those workers are given every opportunity to continue providing for their families and that the next chapter of this adventure is written here in Florida.

Public Hearings on Redistricting are Coming to a City Near You!



This summer, members of the Florida House and Senate will be holding public hearings on re-districting across the state. This is our opportunity to let politicians know how important it is to us that they faithfully follow the Fair Districts standards when they re-draw their own districts. Over 60% of Florida's voters approved Fair Districts in 2010 which created a rubric for how political lines will be drawn in Florida. Political districts are only drawn every ten years, so it is vital that the lines in Florida aren't gerrymandered to aide either political party. Below you will find dates and locations for the redistricting public hearings. If you live in or near these areas, please try to attend and make your voice heard on this critical issue. **For more information on the campaign for redistricting please visit <http://fairdistrictsnow.org/home/>.**

The Public Hearings on redistricting will take place across Florida at these locations listed below:

Monday, August 15th: Stuart 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Blake Library

Tuesday, August 16th: Boca Raton 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Florida Atlantic University

Tuesday, August 16th: Davie 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Broward College

Wednesday, August 17th: Miami 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Miami Dade College Wolfson Campus

Wednesday, August 17th: Miami 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. At the Florida International University, College of Law

Thursday August 18th: Key West 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Florida Keys Community College

Monday, August 29th: Tampa 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Hillsborough County Commission

Tuesday, August 30th: Largo 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the EpiCenter at St. Pete College

Tuesday, August 30th: Sarasota 6p.m. to 9 p.m. at the New College, Harry Sudakoff Conference Center

Wednesday, August 31st: Naples 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Naples Daily News Community Room

Wednesday, August 31st: Lehigh Acres: 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Veterans Park Recreation Center

Thursday, September 1st: Clewiston 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Hendry County Health Department

For Those About to Rock: The Florida AFL-CIO Road Show is Coming to a City Near You

We fought this Legislative session together united; we celebrated and learned together at the Festival for Florida's Future, now it's time to kick our movement into high gear. The Staff of the Florida AFL-CIO will be packing their bags and heading towards your neck of the woods to listen to and talk with local union and coalition leaders and activists about our working families' movement.

President Mike Williams, Legislative and Political Director Dr. Rich Templin, Political Field Director Salandra Benton, Political and Legislative Coordinator Phyllis Garrett, Community Organizer Edwin Enciso, Communications Director Joshua Anijar and Volusia Flagler AFL-CIO President Stacy Stepanovich will all be conducting presentations on Working Families Lobby Corps, Community Outreach, Media Outreach/Social Networking, Legislative Coalition, Farm Team/Labor Candidate School/Target Races and the Strategic Plan detailing progress and laying out the groundwork for the next steps during the remainder of 2011 into the 2012 Election Cycle. These meetings will offer you a chance to provide your opinions and thoughts on the political and strategic programs of the Florida AFL-CIO. Our movement needs your input, your creativity and energy, so join in the conversation when we head into your town.

August 2nd: West Central Florida Federation of Labor at 6:30pm at IBEW 824 located at 6603 E Chelsea St Tampa, Florida 33610

August 23rd: Central FL AFL-CIO at 6pm at IBEW 606 located at 820 Virginia Dr, Orlando FL 32803

August 24th: Space Coast AFL-CIO at 5pm at the Space Coast CLC Office located at 1122 Lake Drive Cocoa, FL 32924

August 25th: Volusia/Flagler AFL-CIO at 6pm at the Volusia Teachers Organization located at 1381 Educators Road Daytona Beach, FL 32124

August 29th: North Florida AFL-CIO at 6pm at IBEW LU# 177 located at 966 North Liberty Street Jacksonville, FL 32206

August 30th: Big Bend Chapter at 6pm at the Florida AFL-CIO Lower Level Conference Room located at 135 S Monroe St Tallahassee, FL 32301

September 1st: Northwest Florida AFL-CIO at 6:3pm at Escambia Education Association Hall located at 6551 North Palafox Street Pensacola, FL 32503

September 6th: Palm Beach/Treasure Coast AFL-CIO at 7pm at Ironworkers Union Hall 1001 located at West 15th Street Riviera Beach, FL

September 7th: South Florida AFL-CIO Time and Location TBD

September 8th: Southwest Chapter Time and Location TBD

North Central Florida AFL-CIO: TBD

Broward County AFL-CIO : TBD

Panama City Chapter :TBD



Remembering where we came from...

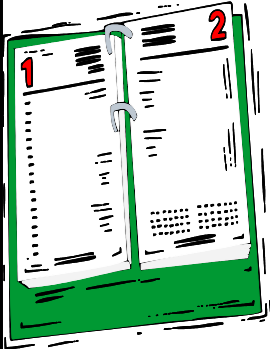
"What can Labor do for itself? The answer is not difficult. Labor can organize; it can unify, it can consolidate its forces. This done, it can demand and command"

-Eugene Debs

"People don't get opportunity or freedom or equality or dignity as an act of charity; they have to fight for it, force it out of the establishment."

-Saul Alinsky





Notes from the Legislative/Political Coordinator – Phyllis Garrett

Working Families Lobby Corps: The 2011-2012 Working Families Lobby Corps will start the week of September 19, 2011 in conjunction with the first week of Interim committees. Be a part of the day to day, “In Your Face Politics” that had such an impact on Legislators and public perception in 2011, as we continue to Fight for Florida’s Families during this next Legislative cycle. Information will be available soon at your local union and CLC offices.

The Florida AFL-CIO 2011 Biennial Convention: The Florida AFL-CIO’s Biennial Convention will be held October 9–12, 2011, at the Buena Vista Palace Resort and Spa, Lake Buena Vista, Florida. More information on the upcoming convention will be sent to you in the upcoming weeks. However, for more information on the Convention including special room rates, please contact Helen Parker at hparker@flafclcio.org or (850) 224-6926

One Last Thing Before You Go...

Become an Online Activist Today!



- FLAFL-CIO’s Website: flafclcio.org
- FL AFL-CIO’s Facebook: [Facebook.com/floridaaflcio](https://www.facebook.com/floridaaflcio)
- FL AFL-CIO’s Twitter: [Twitter.com/Florida_AFL_CIO](https://twitter.com/Florida_AFL_CIO)

FL AFL-CIO’s You-Tube Page: [YouTube.com/Floridaaflcio](https://www.youtube.com/Floridaaflcio)

If you were a lucky person that got this newsletter from someone else and would like to be added to our mailing list so you too can receive “Solidarity in the Sunshine”, then please email or call

Joshua Anijar at janijar@flafclcio.org or 850-228-9841. Please title email “Sign-me up” and we will add you to our mailing list.



NO UNION,
NO BENEFITS,
NO HEALTHCARE,
NO SICK DAYS,
NO PENSION,
NO VACATION,
NO BARGAINING,
NO...



Hick



Published by the Florida AFL-CIO Public Relations Department for our affiliates only. Send address corrections Kellie Putnam, Solidarity in the Sunshine, 135 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32301. Phone 850-224-6926, FAX 850-224-2266.

Mike Williams
President
Brian Dempsey
Secretary-Treasurer

Tallahassee, FL 32301

