

Happy Valentine's Day!

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Members Corner

*Best wishes to Julie and Chester!
Both are long-term employees from
Salem State University.*



Former President Kevin Hanley presents Julie Curtis, retired Unit 1 Steward for Salem State University, a plaque for her years of service and dedication to AFSCME Local 1067.



Chester Cooke, Building Maintenance Supervisor from Salem State University, retired on January 16 after 41 years of service. He will truly be missed. He was well liked and would do anything and help anyone.

*Do you have something you would
like to see in the newsletter?*

*Please send photo and brief
description to:*

skearns1@massasoit.mass.edu



Brothers and Sisters,

IMPORTANT UPDATES!!! GIC

The agitation, anger, and activism brought out public employees across the state and the legislature. Yes, there was a hearing at the State House, and the GIC took a hammering.

On Thursday, February 1, the GIC met and voted to reconsider its proposed elimination of three insurance carriers—Harvard, Fallon, and Tufts of 12-2 to reconsider and then 14-0 to adopt a plan that would maintain the current six carriers for active employees.

Thank you to everyone who contacted the GIC and/or their legislators.

A special thank you to Council 93's — Frank Moroney, Mark Bernard and Jim Durkin

Janus Case

Some of you may or maynot be aware, but over the past two weeks there has been unexpected filing of various briefs submitted by well-respected libertarian and conservative legal scholars who generally are not big fans of unions, but they are attacking Janus and making the case in favor of keeping agency fees.

The Economist and other publications are stating that the content of these unexpected filings are substantial enough that Janus may not be a done deal as everyone thinks.

In case anyone is interested, attached is one particular brief that folks are saying is the most likely to sway the judges in favor of upholding agency fee both because of the content, but also because of the political leanings of the authors being similar to that of Justice Gorsuch.

To read more regarding this update go to:

<https://www.economist.com/blogs/democracyinamerica/2018/02/getting-their-dues>

Strong Unions, Stronger Communities!

We Cannot Let them Divide Us!



Weingarten Rights. Know them, Use them! (SAVE THIS INFORMATION)

If you are unsure if they apply, ask for them anyway. Better to be safe than sorry.

Know your rights! Please read below!

Employee Rights in “Weingarten” Meetings – Know Them, Use Them!

Beware that management ***is not*** obligated to inform employees of their Weingarten rights – employees must ***ask for them***. Unlike Miranda rights – where police are required to tell a suspect of his/her right to an attorney, etc. – employees must ask for their Weingarten rights.

Weingarten – State the following:

“If the discussion in this meeting could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated or impact on my personal working conditions, I request that my steward, local officer or union representative be present.

Without union representation, I choose not to answer any further questions at this time.

This is my right under a Supreme Court decision called Weingarten”.

Weingarten rights apply during investigatory interviews when a supervisor ***questions*** an employee to obtain information that could be used as grounds for discipline for either you or a colleague. When an employee believes such a meeting may lead to discipline, he/she has the right to request union representation.

These basic Weingarten rights stem from a Supreme Court’s decision.

- The employee must request representation before or during the meeting.
- After an employee makes the request, the supervisor has these choices:
 - grant the request and wait for the union representative’s arrival;
 - deny the request and end the meeting immediately; or
- give the employee the choice of either ending the meeting or continuing without representation.

(Never, ever, ever, continue without representation! EVER!)

If the supervisor denies the request and continues to ask questions, the employee has a right to refuse to answer!

In addition, the supervisor is committing an unfair labor practice.

As always, call your Chief Steward if you have questions or if you are unsure!

Please note: Do NOT think that you are bothering your steward if you have a question or a problem with your supervisor and/or management. That is what we are here for.

Table officer contact information is on the front cover.



This is the order that we are spotlighting our schools; we are starting back up after the holidays...
January was supposed to be Worcester State University!

~~Berkshire Community College~~ - not submitted

~~Bristol Community College~~ - not submitted

Bunker Hill Community College - ✓

Bridgewater State University - ✓

~~Cape Cod Community College~~ - not submitted

Framingham State University - ✓

~~Fitchburg State University~~ - not submitted

~~Greenfield Community College~~ - not submitted

~~Holyoke Community College~~ - not submitted

Massasoit Community College - ✓

~~Mass Bay Community College~~ - not submitted

~~Massachusetts College of Art and Design~~ - not submitted

Middlesex Community College - ✓

~~Massachusetts Maritime Academy~~ - not submitted

Mount Wachusett Community College - ✓

Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts - ✓

~~Northern Essex Community College~~ - not submitted

~~North Shore Community College~~ - not submitted

Quinsigamond Community College - ✓

~~Roxbury Community College~~ - not submitted

Salem State University - ✓

Springfield Technical Community College - ✓

~~Westfield State University~~ - not submitted

~~Worcester State University~~ - not submitted

College of the month highlight is complete.

Many thanks to the colleges who participated!

FYI - Only 10 out of 24 colleges responded.



Send dates to organize 03's/part-time employees!

If anyone has any questions please contact:

Kevin Hanley @ khanley@bhcc.mass.edu

Marie Griffin @ mgriffin@bhcc.mass.edu

Sheila Kearns @ skearns1@massasoit.mass.edu or your Stewards

Please come to a meeting to find out how you can become a union member.

Some facts about AFSCME Local 1067 and Council 93:

- AFSCME represents more than 1.6 million members nationwide, with more than 35,000 members of AFSCME Council 93 in Massachusetts. There are over 3,000 members of AFSCME Local 1067 at the Massachusetts state universities and colleges.
- Widely recognized as a powerful and effective voice for workers at the negotiating table, AFSCME consistently secures the best wages and health insurance coverage for our members.
- We have over 500 members who are on the 03 payroll at UMass Amherst and they have a contract with benefits.

We would like to explain the process of how you can become a member of AFSCME Local 1067.

We will be asking 03 employees who are interested in the union to sign union authorization cards. These cards will allow us to request recognition from the Board of Higher Education. Then we can begin the process of negotiating a contract for 03 employees.

You would be entitled to all of the following and much more:

- Wages and benefits negotiated by AFSCME
- Representation for grievances arising under the contract, including representation by a steward, a staff representative, and an attorney if needed.
- Protecting your interests on Beacon Hill with experienced lobbyists
- Assist you with public & media relations
- Access to the AFSCME Advantage Program which provides substantial discounts on everything from auto insurance, to travel discounts, to mortgage and refinance programs, and free college tuition for you and your family members!

Interested?



The meeting will take place on the following date, time, and location. We hope to see you there!



Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____



CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

- The negotiation team is under a ***“gag order”*** until the end of negotiations.
- The team met on Friday, May 5, 2017 with the Staff Representatives of the negotiating team.
- The team met on Friday, May 19, 2017 to finalize proposals for the meeting with the BHE.
- The team met with the BHE team on Tuesday, May 23, 2017 for negotiations.
- The team met with the BHE team on Tuesday, June 20, 2017 for negotiations.
- The team met with the BHE team on Monday, June 26, 2017 for negotiations.
- The team met with the BHE team on Thursday, July 6, 2017 for negotiations.
- The team met with the BHE team on Thursday, July 13, 2017 for negotiations.
- The team met with the BHE team on Monday, July 31, 2017 for continued negotiations.
- The team met with the BHE team on Thursday, August 10, 2017 for continued negotiations.
- The team met with the BHE team on Tuesday, August 22, 2017 for continued negotiations.
- The team met with the BHE team on Tuesday, August 29, 2017 for continued negotiations.
- The team met with the BHE on Tuesday, September 12, 2017 for continued negotiations.
- The team met on Friday, September 22, 2017 to go over the BHE’s proposed packet.
- The team met on September 26, 2017 to finalize our counter-proposal to the BHE packet.
- The team met with the BHE on September 28, 2017 for continued negotiations.
- The team met with the BHE on Friday, October 13, 2017 for continued negotiations.
- The team met on Wednesday, October 25, 2017 to go over the BHE latest proposals.
- The team met on Monday, October 30, 2017 with the BHE for continued negotiations.
- The team met on Tuesday, November 14, 2017 to go over the BHE proposals.
- The team met on Thursday, November 16, 2017 for continued negotiations.
- The team was scheduled to meet on Monday, December 11, 2017 with the BHE for continued negotiations; however the BHE was not punctual, so the team disbursed and returned to work.

UPDATE:

- The team met on Monday, January 22, 2018 at Worcester State University with the BHE for continued negotiations.
- The team met on Monday, January 29, 2018 at BHCC to go over proposals and strategies for negotiations.
- The team met on Wednesday, January 31, 2018 at bSU with the BHE for continued negotiations.

The team is working extremely hard to give you a fair contract!

Remember: Until a new agreement is reached, signed, and ratified we are still working under the 2014-2017 contract.



Remember...

My Union is my Voice

Local 1067



AFSCME®

**Strong Unions,
Stronger Communities!**

We Cannot Let them Divide Us!

Don't leave your **rights** to **chance**...

Recommit to your Union **TODAY!!!**

Give your Union a fighting chance...

JOIN PEOPLE

(Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality)

Contact a table officer or your union steward!



Get these cards in...

AFSCME STRONG

AFSCME Council 93

☒ **Yes! I am AFSCME Strong.**
I want a strong voice at work and in my community

Yes, sign me up to:

- ☒ Talk to colleagues at work about AFSCME
- ☒ Make phone calls to AFSCME members for campaigns
- ☒ Knock AFSCME member doors during campaigns

Membership Application

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Membership and Authorization for Dues Deduction

I hereby apply for membership in Council 93 (hereafter "Union") and I agree to abide by its Constitution and Bylaws. I authorize the Union and its successor or assignee to act as my exclusive bargaining representative for purposes of collective bargaining with respect to wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment with my Employer.

Effective immediately, I hereby voluntarily authorize and direct my Employer to deduct from my pay each pay period, regardless of whether I am or remain a member of the Union, the amount of dues certified by the Union, and as they may be adjusted periodically by the Union, and to authorize my Employer to remit such amount monthly to the Union.

This voluntary authorization and assignment shall remain in effect in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement. If the applicable collective bargaining agreement or state statute does not address revocation, then this voluntary authorization and assignment shall be irrevocable, regardless of whether I am or remain a member of the Union, for a period of one year from the date of execution or until the termination date of the collective bargaining agreement (if there is one) between the Employer and the Union, whichever occurs sooner, and for year to year thereafter unless I give the Employer and the Union written notice of revocation not less than ten (10) days and not more than twenty (20) days before the end of any yearly period, or in accordance with state statute. The applicable collective bargaining agreement is available for review, upon request. This card supersedes any prior check-off authorization card I signed.

I recognize that my authorization of dues deductions, and the continuation of such authorization from one year to the next, is voluntary and not a condition of my employment.

In order to comply with Internal Revenue Service rulings, be advised that your membership dues are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. However, they may be tax deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses.

Contribution Form

I hereby authorize my employer and associated agencies to deduct, each pay period, the amount certified as a voluntary contribution to be paid to the treasurer of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees PEOPLE, AFSCME, AFL-CIO, P.O. Box 65334, Washington, D.C. 20035-5334, to be used for the purpose of making political contributions and expenditures. My contribution is voluntary, and I understand that it is not required as a condition of membership in any organization, or as a condition of continued employment, and is free of reprisal. I understand that any contribution guideline is only a suggestion and I am free to contribute more or less than that amount and will not be favored or disadvantaged due to the amount of my contribution or refusal to contribute, and that I may revoke this authorization at any time by giving written notice.

Deduction Per Pay Period

☐ \$5 ☐ \$10 ☐ \$15
☐ Other \$ _____ each pp

Circle jacket size.
 S M L XL 2XL Other _____

For Office Use Only

☐ JACKET RECEIVED

Signature _____ Date _____

In accordance with the federal law, AFSCME PEOPLE will accept contributions only from members of AFSCME and their families. Contributions from other persons will be returned. Contributions or gifts to AFSCME PEOPLE are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

☐ New Member

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY.

☐ Re-commit

Local Number _____ Employer _____

Last Name _____ First Name _____ M.I. _____

Street Address _____ Apt. No. _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP Code _____

SSN (last four digits) _____ Employee ID # _____ Job Title _____

Cell Phone _____ Personal E-mail Address _____

By providing my cell phone number, I understand that AFSCME and its affiliates may use automated calling technologies and/or text message me on my cell phone on a periodic basis. Carrier message and data rates may apply to such texts.

Signature _____ Date _____

AFSCME PEOPLE

Become a PEOPLE MVP for \$8.35/ month (\$100 annually)



PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY.

Last Name _____ First Name _____ M.I. _____

Street Address _____ Apt. No. _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP Code _____

SSN (last four digits) _____ Employee ID # _____ Job Title _____

Local Number _____ Employer _____

Cell Phone _____ Home Phone _____

By providing my cell phone number, I understand that AFSCME and its affiliates may use automated calling technologies and/or text message me on my cell phone on a periodic basis. Carrier message and data rates may apply to such texts.

Personal E-mail Address _____

059-16 PEOPLE



Notice

* Campus Police *

A reminder regarding the opportunity to purchase specialized insurance for police officers.

Please note that to purchase this insurance **100%** participation is needed of members of your department.

The local will pick up the cost of the insurance for the first six-months.

A copy of the brochure can be found on our website under forms
<https://afscme1067.org>





Massachusetts Department of Higher Education Newsclips

CAMPUS NEWS

EARLY COLLEGE

Central Mass. colleges, schools receive preliminary state approval for early college programs - telegram.com 01/23/18
\$20,000 state grants helping Holyoke students in early college programs - masslive.com 01/23/18

BUDGET FY 19

Reaching Higher for Higher Ed – Running the Campus - The Eagle Tribune 01/26/18
Gov. Baker's College Plan Takes Small Steps As Crushing Student Debt Looms - WBUR 01/25/18
What's in Gov. Charlie Baker's FY19 budget proposal? - masslive.com 01/24/18

UMASS

UMASS AMHERST | Interim director of Campus Planning gives update on master plan and campus development at UMass – Massachusetts Daily Collegian 02/01/18
UMASS AMHERST | UMass awarded \$11 Million to work with Tesla Energy to build Large Battery Storage System – Massachusetts Daily Collegian 01/24/18
UMASS AMHERST | Students say UMass policy on rallies troubling, though rarely enforced - Amherst Bulletin 01/18/18
UMASS AMHERST | Chan Zuckerberg Initiative awards \$5.5 million to UMass for artificial intelligence project - masslive.com 01/16/18
UMASS AMHERST | UMass responds to free speech and assembly suit - Greenfield Recorder 01/16/18
UMASS AMHERST | UMass Amherst Sued Over 'Egregious Free Speech Policy' - NewBostonPost 01/12/18
UMASS AMHERST | UMass calling on Congress to come up with solution for DACA recipients - WWLP.com 01/08/17
UMASS BOSTON | UMass Boston finds big fix for budget woes - The Boston Globe 01/31/18
UMASS BOSTON | UMass Boston Urges DACA Students to Renew Their Statuses Before March - umassmedia.com 01/27/18
UMASS BOSTON | UMass Boston, citing new garage, to boost parking fees - The Boston Globe 01/27/18
UMASS BOSTON | UMass Boston Lists Bayside Site For Potential Sale - WBUR 01/25/18
UMASS BOSTON | Chinese institute at UMass Boston accused of promoting censorship - The Boston Globe 01/16/18
UMASS BOSTON | UMass Boston's Dr. Evil - Commonwealth Magazine 01/09/18
UMASS LOWELL | Avangrid, UMass Lowell to Collaborate on Clean Energy - UMass Lowell 01/18/18

MULTIPLE CAMPUSES

MULTIPLE CAMPUSES | Our view: Hunger a problem for college students - gloucestertimes.com 01/08/17



COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND STATE UNIVERSITIES

BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BERKSHIRE CC | BCC Encourages Berkshire Immigrants To Tell Their Stories - WAMC 01/11/17

BERKSHIRE CC | BCC Offers Variety of Courses at McCann Tech - iBerkshires.com 01/10/18

BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY

BRIDGEWATER STATE U | Duxbury couple gives Bridgewater State \$8 million property - Scituate Mariner 01/30/18

BRISTOL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BRISTOL CC | Frank Baptista appointed to BCC Board of Trustees - Herald News 02/01/18

BRISTOL CC | Girls Who Code program under way at BCC - Herald News 01/30/18

BRISTOL CC | Medeiros to chair BCC board - Taunton Gazette 01/09/18

BRISTOL CC | Free coding classes available at BCC for New Bedford middle school-aged girls - SouthCoast Today 01/07/18

BUNKER HILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BUNKER HILL CC | No Cure In Sight For Biopharma Degree Inflation - WGBH 01/19/18

CAPE COD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

CAPE COD CC | 4Cs Seeks Public Input as Part of Reaccreditation Process - capecod.com 01/24/18

GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

GREENFIELD CC | Bundles and Access Codes Destroy Efforts to Cut Textbook Pricing - Campus Technology 01/26/18

GREENFIELD CC | Greenfield Students Become Peak Virtual Astronauts - Newton News 01/26/18

GREENFIELD CC | Greenfield Community College reinstates Outdoor Leadership program - Greenfield Recorder 01/22/18

GREENFIELD CC | Editorial: GCC's Starter Academy unique way to build an appetite for learning - Greenfield Recorder 01/18/18

GREENFIELD CC | GCC to open doors through new Starter Academy - Greenfield Recorder 01/10/18

GREENFIELD CC | Editorial: Jail program creates appetite for learning - Hampshire Gazette 01/10/18

HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

HOLYOKE CC | Holyoke Community College MGM Culinary Arts Institute ready for students - masslive.com 01/18/18

FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

FITCHBURG STATE U | Theater block renovations lauded in Fitchburg - telegram.com 02/01/18

FITCHBURG STATE U | Fitchburg panel discusses roots of inequality - telegram.com 02/01/18

FITCHBURG STATE U / QUINSIGAMOND CC | Three Central Mass. groups land \$28K for manufacturing career grants - WBJournal.com 01/26/18

FITCHBURG STATE U | Ice gone at Landry Arena, but Fitchburg State facility upgraded - Sentinel & Enterprise 01/24/18



FRAMINGHAM STATE UNIVERSITY

FRAMINGHAM STATE U | FSU offers \$5K to catch 'hateful coward' writing racist graffiti - MetroWest Daily News 01/16/18

FRAMINGHAM STATE U | FSU students march against racist acts on campus - MetroWest Daily News 01/16/18

MASSASOIT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MASSASOIT CC | Massasoit Community College Paramedic Program earns national accreditation - southcoasttoday.com 01/28/18

MASS BAY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MASSBAY CC | MassBay students headed to Detroit car show - MetroWest Daily News 01/24/18

MASSBAY CC | Wellesley's MassBay Community College receives endowment for single-parent students - The Boston Globe 01/17/18

MASSBAY CC | MassBay allows high school students to try out college - MetroWest Daily News 01/14/18

MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

MCLA | New Trustee Joins MCLA Board - iBerkshires.com 02/01/18

MCLA | MCLA Adds New Minor in Entrepreneurship - iBerkshires.com 01/22/18

MCLA | MCLA Recognized for 'Outstanding Energy and Environmental Efforts' - iBerkshires.com 01/22/18

MCLA | MCLA Announces New Performing Arts Programs - iBerkshires.com 01/10/18

MASSACHUSETTS MARITIME ACADEMY

MASS MARITIME | Mass Maritime Students Spend Weekend in Colombia As Sea Term Rolls On - capecod.com 01/29/18

MASS MARITIME | MMA cadet undertakes maiden 'Voyage' - Cape Cod Times 01/13/18

MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MIDDLESEX CC | James C. Mabry: Make this the year to invest in yourself - Lowell Sun Online 01/25/18

MIDDLESEX CC | MCC Transition Program offers certificate for special needs students - Wicked Local 01/16/18

NORTH ERN ESSEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

NORTHERN ESSEX CC | NECC creates Sexual Harassment Awareness Video Series - eagletribune.com 01/31/18

NORTHERN ESSEX CC | Baker Names Fernandez to Northern Essex Board of Trustees - WHAV 01/29/18

NORTHERN ESSEX CC | NECC employees helping students cut costs - eagletribune.com 01/23/18

NORTHERN ESSEX CC / NORTH SHORE CC | Confronting hunger on campus - hgazette.com 01/18/17

QUINSIGAMOND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

QUINSIGAMOND CC | WPI, QCC to Share \$4M State Grant for Joint Integrated Photonics Lab - Photonics.com 01/12/18

SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY

SALEM STATE U | SSU's campus plans don't account for empty Horace Mann - salemnews.com 01/28/18

SALEM STATE U | Benton: A new era at Salem State - salemnews.com 01/25/18

SALEM STATE U | Salem State University Inaugurates New President - Salem Patch 01/19/18

SALEM STATE U | Salem State reports new racism incident - salemnews.com 01/16/18

SPRINGFIELD TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SPRINGFIELD TECH CC | Massachusetts Is Fertile Ground for Biotechnology Careers - Business West 01/09/18

HIGHER ED POLICY TRENDS

Report documents surge in campus propaganda by white supremacists - Inside Higher Ed 02/01/18

#MeToo movement inspires similar campaigns among colleges - Inside Higher Ed 01/30/18

Use of financial aid continues to grow, though fewer students are borrowing for college - The Washington Post 01/30/18

Many state flagship universities leave black and Latino students behind - The Hechinger Report 01/29/18

Reality sets in that DACA deal might not get done - CNNPolitics 01/29/18

'Dreamer' deal should not be out of reach - masslive.com 01/29/18

What's behind the soaring cost of college textbooks - CBS News 01/26/18

Gov. Charlie Baker seeks to cap sick-time accruals for college employees - Boston Business Journal 01/25/18

Colleges and states scramble to comply with instructor credential rules for dual-credit courses - Inside Higher Ed 01/23/18

Are states doing enough to regulate for-profit colleges? This study says no. - The Washington Post 01/22/18

A Dreamer about to graduate – now what? - Commonwealth Magazine 01/19/18

'Dreamers' In Limbo As Congress Debates DACA - WGBH News 01/18/17

Editorial: Public self-service - Boston Herald 01/18/17

OPINION: In higher ed, lower enrollment isn't the only sign of trouble - The Hechinger Report 01/16/18

American Higher Ed: Innovative, Adaptable, Transformative - Bacon's Rebellion 01/16/18

Three quarters of U.S. public school spending cuts restored - The Hechinger Report 01/15/18

Budgets Suffer After A Drop In International Student Enrollment - NPR 01/15/18

It's Hard to Study if You're Hungry - The New York Times 01/14/17

State report is cautious about expanding four-year degrees offered by Calif. community colleges - Inside Higher Ed 01/12/18

New Analysis of Student Loan Default Data - Inside Higher Ed 01/12/18

Education Dept. awards debt-collection contract to company with ties to DeVos - The Washington Post 01/12/18

Chamber Calls for Better Alignment of Degrees, Jobs - Inside Higher Ed 01/11/18

Massachusetts College Offers Classes For Entry-Level Jobs In Hospitality Sector - WAMC 01/09/17

How budget cuts 10 years ago are still affecting public education today - The Berkshire Eagle 01/07/18

Study: STEM Students in US Most Likely to Change Majors - VOA News 01/06/18

**WHAT IS PRESIDENT'S DAY ACTUALLY ABOUT?****LIVIA GERSHON FEBRUARY 3, 2018**

What will you do for Presidents' Day, February 19, 2018? Whatever your plans are, they probably don't include celebrating George Washington. For most of American history, Washington's Birthday was a really big deal, but, as scholar Barry Schwartz explains, that's changed a lot since the middle of the twentieth century.

Schwartz writes that holidays are collective commemorations of the history (or mythology) that binds people together. "When the conditions of life change drastically, the most decisive historical events will seem irrelevant," he writes. "But holidays . . . will make the people remember and keep them together."

For a long time, Schwartz writes, Washington's Birthday served that purpose for U.S. citizens. Of course, it helped that few African-Americans or Native Americans held positions of institutional power, making it easy to avoid talking about Washington as a slave owner, or his razing of Iroquois villages.

Changing Washington's Birthday to Presidents' Day was less about formal politics than about culture and public memory, according to one historian. As recently as the 1930s and '40s, newspapers ran images of the nation's first president above the fold to celebrate the holiday. Community groups held celebrations, families went to basketball games or movie features, and children posed for formal photographs. In 1938, 5,000 people attended the annual memorial mass at Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

A change came with the 1968 Uniform Holiday Act, which moved several holidays, including Washington's Birthday, to Mondays. But, Schwartz writes, these Monday holidays aren't really holidays at all. They're vacations.

"The vacation epitomizes individual freedom, provides an escape," he writes. "Commitment holidays, in contrast, are meant to be observed collectively at certain times and places, in certain ways, and to evoke a shared and solemn sense of what is being celebrated."

Language transforming Washington's Birthday into Presidents' Day didn't make it into the final Uniform Holiday Act, but, over the next two decades, the country gradually made the shift anyway. Today, the federal government still formally celebrates Washington's Birthday, but many states and private institutions use Presidents' Day, often illustrated with images of both Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

The change, Schwartz writes, was less about formal politics than about culture and public memory. Between 1956 and 1975, surveys found Americans lost much of their reverence for Washington, Lincoln, and Franklin Roosevelt. Not coincidentally, this was a period when criticism of American institutions and history moved into the cultural mainstream.

By 1999, a promoter of celebrations for the bicentennial of Washington's death complained Washington "had great name recognition but not a real high quotient of excitement. . . . He was the first president. Of course. So what?"

To Schwartz, the decline of Washington's public image doesn't reflect fraying patriotism. After all, 9/11 and the start of the Iraq War were greeted with ritual public displays. Instead, it suggests a postmodern nation with little visceral connection to the past. Unlike the clear historical meaning of Washington's Birthday, Presidents' Day can be interpreted as celebrating Washington and Lincoln, or celebrating all of the nation's presidents, including the current one.

"No one can identify which of these two sets of presidents the holiday celebrates," Schwartz writes. "Few are bothered by this ambiguity—perhaps because Presidents' Day points to so little beyond itself."



Monthly Executive Board Meetings
take place on the second Tuesday of every month,
except in January and September.

Worcester Elks
233 Mill Street
Worcester, MA

9:30 a.m.

Questions? Please contact a table officer.

