

Let's talk some more about a living wage

Three of us met around my kitchen table on the morning of Sept. 8, 2012 to have a conversation about the wages and working conditions of low-wage workers in Galveston.

We talked for a long time and concluded we should try to do something. We agreed to meet again the following month ... and then again.

Last year on the last Monday in September we held our first Galveston Living Wage Conference at Live Oak Baptist Church. There were presentations at this first conference from lawyers, local officials and the US Department of Labor concerning voter registration, labor rights, registration for Obamacare and obtaining free legal aid.

A couple months ago

Guest column



Steve McIntyre lives in Galveston.

we held our second Galveston Living Wage Conference on the last Monday in September at St. Patrick Catholic Church. There were presentations at this conference from lawyers, local officials and the Galveston County District Attorney concerning Sec. 3 jobs program at Galveston Housing Authority and city of Galveston, J1 immigrant workers, prosecuting wage theft, and the demographics of Galveston's low wage workers.

The recent conference was sponsored by NAACP Galveston

Unit 6180, LULAC Council 151, Gulf Coast Homeless Coalition, Galveston Coalition for Justice, Galveston Northside Taskforce, The Children's Center Inc., Gulf Coast Interfaith, United Way of Galveston, The Jesse Tree, and St. Vincent's House.

You can obtain more information about both conferences at Gulf Coast Interfaith's website.

There have been many small quiet conversations since that first meeting around my kitchen table. Letters have been sent to different employers concerning the wages and benefits of low-wage workers.

Information has been provided and conversations have been held or scheduled with GISD, city of Galveston, UTMB, Texas A&M,

COM, Galveston College, Galveston Park Board, Galveston Port Authority, Galveston Housing Authority and others. These quiet conversations with people of goodwill have been helpful in gaining a better understanding of the daily lives and work of our friends and neighbors in Galveston.

Similar conversations have been happening more and more frequently around our country where some cities talk about setting a higher local minimum wage, mandating higher wages in city contracts, and encouraging local chains and large employers to do the right thing. Our third annual Galveston Living Wage Conference will be held on the last Monday in September, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. Mark your calendar.