

IBEW Local Union 965 News

January 2008

From President Irwin

I attended the IBEW Safety Caucus on October 10. I asked for help from the group on safety rules related to wind generation; I'm waiting on feedback from Local 6 out of San Francisco. In our utility break out session we discussed NFPA 70E, how the committee is trying to change the scope of their work to cover all electrical work. The committee removed Chapter 4 (Installation Section) in the latest proposal; there is a movement to push 70E as the electrical safety regulation, and use the National Electric Code as the installation guideline with no exclusions for utilities or other properties.

We also discussed the use of Drive-Cams, these are cameras positioned in the cab of the vehicle. They are connected to a Global Positioning Satellite which record speed of travel, seat belt use. The camera turns on when breaks are applied. There are many utility's fighting the use of these.

A Chicago Local had concerns over gloving blown lightning arrestors. They have had a number of near misses on these. Some utilities are using a shield on their shotgun when installing lightning arrestors. Failed porcelain cutouts were a huge topic with problems from the West to the East coasts. Most utilities are changing the porcelain cutouts to a polymer.

Attacks on utility workers are taking place in St. Louis, Detroit and New Jersey. It appears the price of copper has made the utility trucks look like Brinks vehicles.

Local 1439 has teamed up with Ameren Utility in establishing a Blue Hat program. This is where a bargaining unit member acts as liaison between management and workers to address safety items and concerns. A similar program exists in Detroit and Arizona with great success.

The aging work force is a huge issue across the United States. The business agent representing the Florida Power and Light said 51% of the journeymen will be eligible for retirement by the year 2012. Many locals expressed the lack of apprentice training programs as a huge concern. Some are seeing employers trying to expedite the training of apprenticeship programs.

I would like to thank the members of Local 965 for allowing me to attend this very worthwhile conference. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Also, if there are any issues you would like me to bring up at this conference in the future, please give me a call at the union office.

Fraternally Yours
President Irwin

Training Our Workforce

2

Recently I attended the Fifteenth Annual Utility Workers Coalition Conference. I listened to guest speakers including Public Service Commissioners, IBEW International Representatives, University of Wisconsin Professors, and the Director of Apprenticeship Standards. One common concern all of these speakers touch on was the growing need for skilled trades' people. At least half the technical workforce in the energy industry alone will reach retirement age in 5 to 10 years. That being said, projected demand for electricity is expected to increase by 40% by 2030. To keep up with demand, it's projected we'll need 7100 people in the utility industry and another 3000 in utility system construction. Currently there are only 300 new people in the utility pipeline. Statewide, there is a 50% drop-out rate in today's universities/colleges. A vast majority of UW graduates are leaving the state for better job opportunities. This was referred to as the "Brain Drain Era." As for Technical Colleges, 98% of graduates stay in Wisconsin helping boost our state's economy. We're also seeing people enter the trades later in their lives, many with 4-year degrees. In other words, the demand for labor is up and the supply is down.

After hearing all of this, I started thinking how we (Alliant Energy) are preparing for these challenges. Currently the average Alliant worker is 50 years old and 58% of our workforce is set to retire in ten years. Recently Alliant addressed the shrinking workforce by hiring workers/apprentices in some key areas. This has helped some, but there's still a great demand for workers being training by the company. I know firsthand that this is a real problem.

I was first introduced to this problem when I was selected to participate on the JATC (Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee). I served on this board for 5 years then removing myself in 2007. At the very first meeting I saw the need to improve and update the training for new apprentices. Any suggestions or ideas by me or other virtually were ignored or tabled for the next monthly meeting. The lack of effort on the company's part was not only upsetting but irresponsible. As a company that prides itself as being leaders in the industry, I find it inexcusable that our training has deteriorated with time. Now more than ever, it is critical as leaders that we make the extra effort to train our people. If this means going over your EOP, Safety Rules or even breaking out those dusty old school notes then that is what we have to do. Remember "those we train today are those we work with tomorrow".

In Solidarity,
Todd Haakinson

Welcome New Members!

Finally employers that Local 965 represent have started to hire and the organizing efforts of Kemp and Mike are bringing in new members. I encourage both old and new members to attend our monthly unit meetings. You will find a notice of these meetings posted on your union bulletin boards with the date, time and location. At these meetings you will review and approve our E-board meeting minutes and hear any grievances that may have been settled or any new ones filed. Also, letters are reviewed, as well as motions made to our E-board. The meetings will be attended by the Business Manager, Assistant Business Manager or an officer of the union. After the meeting, there will be time to socialize. No matter how hard your business agent or his assistants work for us, we need to remember WE MAKE THE UNION STRONG through solidarity. Your attendance at the next meeting is greatly appreciated.

President Rick Irwin

Another Election Year

3

If you haven't noticed—the TV and Radio news are starting to fill with information in regards to 2008 being another Election year. As always, it is important for us, as good citizens of a Labor Union, to exercise one of our basic key freedoms and one of cherished responsibility and that is getting out to vote next year.

It has been a tough 8 years for Organized Labor. Many shots have been fired at us to weaken previous protections of lost and diluted Labor laws and the fact of the expansion of Right to Work states and the harm this issue causes to the national strength of labor unions. You can also see by some of the recent decisions and newly implemented red tape from the Department of Labor that we need to make sure we have candidates that respect labor unions as we are now getting to be less of a force in the workplace, now that only 13% of the entire American workforce is unionized workers.

We need to elect candidates that will help the working class Americans that work hard and not just the elite class in this country that sit back and count their riches. We are currently losing ground each day and more workers are falling through the cracks due to devastating issues like some of the past trade agreements and the increasing loss of ability to afford healthcare.

Here are a few important dates to remember in the next year of elections:

2/19/08: Presidential Primary and State Judicial offices Primary

4/1/08: Spring Judicial elections for the State

9/9/08: Primary for office other than President (Partisan election)

11/4/08: National General Election for all candidates

Remember the registration process for voting in Wisconsin has changed as of January 1, 2006; all municipalities and townships in Wisconsin require voter registration prior to allowing a person to vote. The Federal Government introduced the "Help American Vote Act of 2002" which now requires any person registering to vote to show proof of residency. You must show a document when you register which displays where you live, such as:

- A current and valid Wisconsin driver's license
- A current and valid Wisconsin identification card
- Any identification card issued by an employer displaying a photo, but not including a business card
- A real estate tax bill or a receipt for the current year or the year preceding the date of the election
- A residential lease for the period that includes election day
- A gas, electric or telephone service statement (utility bill) for the period but not earlier than 90 days before Election day
- Bank statement
- Paycheck

If you are a first time voter in Wisconsin you will be asked to show proof of how long you have resided at your current residence in order to vote, which needs to be no less than 10 days prior to the election.

Do not forget that if you cannot be present to vote at any of the above elections, you can vote by absentee ballot. You need to get a form to apply an absentee ballot, for EB121 from your municipal or town clerk's office or you can go online through the Wisconsin State Elections Board website (<http://elections.state.wi.us/>). This website also has a great deal of information about the upcoming elections in much greater detail.

The important thing is that we need to do our part and get and vote in 2008. IBEW Local 965 recommends that you vote for Labor-Friendly candidates who will help all of us become stronger in our workplaces and more secure at home.

Mike Pyne

Assistant Business Manager

Organizing Efforts for 2006-2007

4

One thing about organizing is you have to successfully get them a contract. In 2006, we organized Muscoda Public Works, Reedsburg Craft, Reedsburg Non-Craft, Cuba City Craft, and the Muscoda police. We now have a first contract with the Muscoda Public Works that took over a year. The Reedsburg Craft and Non-Craft contract expires at the end of this year. Mike and I are presently negotiating their first contract with us. Tony and I negotiated the Cuba City contract and we ran into a dead end, so we are in the process of taking it to arbitration. The last one for 2006 was the Muscoda police. We are presently taking their contract out for a vote.

For 2007 we organized the Union Financial Group. You probably know them as Principal. Tony is working on their contract which should be finished by the first of the year. Mike and I are organizing a clerical group on the west side of the state and are waiting to file a petition for election. We are also going after six more places to make them 965 members. Two of them are manufacturing and the other four are all involved in the electrical field.

The International has directed all IBEW unions that they WILL do organizing. If we don't, we could be reprimanded. They feel, as we do, that the more places we get organized will bring up the standard which will give us a great advantage in contract negotiations.

A lot of the leads I get are from places calling us directly that want to be union. This tells me there is a problem with working conditions, wage, and medical. If everything is fine, I would not get a call. I see that they are not treated fairly and are underpaid and that it will take more than one contract to bring them up to the union standard.

I am always looking for places to organize. It does not matter what kind of work it is. We can still represent them. I just recently lost an election by one vote for an auto body shop. I am asking that all of you look around your communities. If you see a place of business that looks like a potential group, give me a call. It would also help if you had at least one contact. That would give us an added advantage. We will still try a place if you have no contacts. According to Local 965 working rules, if you give us a lead on a target, you may be eligible for up to \$250.

Kemp Grutt

Organizer and Assistant Business Manager

From the Vice-President

I had the opportunity to attend the UWC Conference in October. I would like to share some of the information that was discussed at the Clerical Workshop I attended. This workshop had approximately 20 people from various locals. Many of the discussion points seemed to be common themes for many of us:

- Threat of outsourcing in call centers and other work groups
- An increase in the number of disciplines—more suspensions/terminations
- Seeing more "last chance" agreements
- Work migrating to non-bargaining positions

It was a great opportunity to network with the other locals and to compare and share ideas on what their experiences have been in dealing and working through these issues. At the end of the workshop we shared our e-mail addresses with each other to promote continued communication as we work together.

Dorothy Curtis and I volunteered to work the booths on Wednesday evening, November 28 at the Holiday Fantasy in Lights at Olin-Turville Park in Madison. The light display was beautiful and you certainly appreciate all the time and effort that goes into putting this event together. If Local 965 continues to participate in this event in the future, I would encourage everyone to consider volunteering. It's easy, fun and you feel good about what you are doing. What a great way to have Local 965 recognized in our community. This year Local 965 was one of six groups to volunteer to work the booths for this event. In return, the six groups will receive the donations

that are provided and those donations will be given to local charities. The donations that Local 965 receives will be donated to a local non-profit organization. This reflects to our community the spirit of giving by IBEW Local 965. Happy Holidays!

Holly Kaiser
IBEW Local 965 Vice President
Chief Steward Madison GO

Generation Joint Health and Safety Committee

For the majority of Local 965 members who attend the contract interpretation meetings, the presenter will usually open up with the saying “and the highlights are”, which is almost always kicked back to you “what highlights.” I believe that the outcome of the '07 Negotiations does have many highlights with one of them being the formation of the Generation Joint Health and Safety Committee.

This committee will be made up of one person, plus an alternate, from each generating facility plus one representing the hydros. Your Safety Chairperson is the preferred committee member. Company representatives will be the EH&S specialist from each facility along with other designated representatives from either group. A better definition of the committees' responsibility and tasks is in the '07 Report Out but a short version would be to “advise the Company regarding only those matters directly related to employee safety and industrial health.” Each of the Generating Facilities own Safety Committees/Teams will remain in place with both committees complimenting each other.

The Local 965 Committee Members are as follows:

Rock River—Jeff Cazy
Edgewater—John Hodzinski, alternate Joe McClurg
Columbia—Roy Erdman
PDS and Kilbourn—Bob Koehl
Nelson Dewey—Laurie Vogt
Chairperson—Bob Jung
Local 965 President—Rick Irwin

We are currently in the process of developing a charter and finalizing a meeting date for our group to get together and then both parties to meet. Bob McCracken, who is a Senior Safety Consultant with Alliant on the Iowa property, has been helping us get started with this endeavor and I thank him for his participation.

Bob Jung

Unit Chair Columns Unit 1 Chair-Mike Patoka

I was fortunate enough to attend the 15th Annual Utility Workers Coalition Conference in October. In attendance were 10 IBEW Locals along with Locals from various UWUA, AFSCME, OPEIU, USW, UWSA and IUOE organizations from across the Midwest.

The conference included various keynote speakers covering a range of topics from apprenticeships to coal-fired power plants to new compensation systems for collective bargaining units along with break-out sessions with open forum discussion on gas, electric, clerical, utility operation and generation issues. We had a state-by-state update of what was happening in the utility industry and topped it off with a breakfast buffet meeting with PSCW commissioner Lauren Azar. All of this provided more than enough information overloads for the short amount of time we were there.

During the gas portion of the break-out workshops, which Mike Pyne and I attended, some of the discussion centered around GPS tracking of vehicles AND employees and automated meter reading. AMR isn't all it is cracked up to be. Many of the utilities there reported lots of problems from being unable to receive a reading to dead meters. It seems that their service departments are as busy as ever trying to keep up with all of the extra service orders.

Some utilities are using GPS systems to track the routes of their employee's vehicles along with any unplanned stops or detours. A few have gone so far as to install cameras in the cabs of the vehicles to monitor not only what happens out the front of the truck (a la squad cars), but also inside the cab to watch what the employees are doing at all times! Sounds like a pretty expensive way to enforce the no smoking policy.

The utility industry is indeed changing, going with more high tech devices and less UNION labor. We have to do what we can to promote the importance and value of our Union skills by keeping the lights on and the gas flowing for our customers while returning home safely to our families at the end of our workday.

Mike Patoka
Unit 1 Chairperson
Marion Chief Steward

Unit 3 Chair—Gary McGrath

Not a lot happening this holiday season after talking with the Chief Stewards from Ripon, Fond du Lac, North Area and Beaver Dam. As for **Berlin**, there is one outstanding grievance at third step as of this writing. I am told some of our members from **Fond du Lac** and **Beaver Dam** are participating in constructing floats for holiday parades in their respective communities. The Unit 3 Solidarity/Holiday party was held at Miller's in Ripon following the Unit 3 meeting at the **Ripon** office building December 5, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. Any members of Unit 3 with something of interest concerning union activities, feel free to call me, (Gary McGrath) so it can be included in future newsletters. Attendance at Unit 3 meetings has been very low since negotiations were completed, sure would be nice to see that improve! Also Unit 3 is in need of a Unit Recorder/Vice Unit Chairperson, anyone interested contact the Local Union Office at 608-259-2400.

In Solidarity,
Gary McGrath

Unit 4 Chair—Dave Daily

I recently had the privilege of attending the Fifteenth Annual Utility Workers Coalition Conference. There were a number of speakers that were very informative as well as a state by state report from the seven different unions that were in attendance at the conference. Mrs. Gail Francis, Senior Associate at the Center on Wisconsin Strategy spoke about the upcoming carbon dioxide regulations and the new technologies that are available. IGCC with Carbon Capture and Storage captures the CO2 and pumps it into the ground (where feasible) enabling the recovery of oil and natural gas. Other byproducts include slag and ash salability and hydrogen byproduct for fuel cells.

Mr. Todd Newkirk of the IBEW International office's Utility department focused on Gasification and combined cycle units. He stated there needs to be 145 GW of new coal capacity by 2030 stressing the higher efficiency units.

Mr. Tyson Slocum, Director of the Public Citizen's Energy Program, spoke regarding stronger regulation of energy markets and greater public investments in clean, sustainable energy to help protect consumers and combat global warming. He frequently presents his findings in testimony before the US Congress and appears regularly on television, radio and in print. The information he presented was very interesting. Since 1990 the utility workforce has been slashed 40%. MISO has a full time staff in Washington, DC costing \$100,000. They have no accountability and they are responsible for consumer reliability. Comparing the costs of regulation (\$.09) to deregulation (\$.14) + higher yearly increases is a no brainer on regulation. A lot of information was shared on the "need to end" all of the deregulation. Examples were given of deregulated utilities reducing generation to hold up the price of electricity. The end line user is basically screwed.

University of Wisconsin School for Workers professor Ken Mericle talked about pensions and the pension protection act of 2006. He pointed out how in the last 22 years 401K pension plans have taken the place of the defined benefit pension plans.

Karen Morgan, Director of the Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards and the PSC, facilitated a meeting with utility companies and unions on discussing workforce issues. She seemed somewhat frustrated by the responses of the companies. Pointing out that we are getting old and the demand for labor is up. With the emphasis on college, less people are interested in our line of work. More people are leaving the workforce than are coming in. For the future needs, right now there are about 300 people in the training pipeline.

There was also a state by state panel with representatives from seven different states where contracts, strikes, fatalities, political involvement and more were all presented. We broke out into our respective areas; mine was generation. After listening to all of the people from a wide number of utilities, I found out that most of us are in the same boat. There are a small number of utilities that have seen the light and are addressing the aging workforce issue, but not ours.

Dave Daily, Edgewater Chief Steward

Unit 5 Chair—Bruce Giese

Since the ratification of the current labor contract with Alliant, the Local office and the Executive Board members have been assessing the strategies and action items that surfaced during the contract negotiations. Some of the items that have been implemented and are currently being worked on are: The Solidarity Committee and the Membership Participation Committee. In October several members and I attended the Utility Workers Coalition Conference. Discussion subjects included the aging workforce, IGCC with CCS technology and the changing of 401K's under the Pension Protection Act of 2006. Another topic of discussion was the status of legislative initiatives in as far as the effects on the IBEW union members. Breakout sessions were held in different fields. I attended sessions with other generation workers, where the statuses of attendees' contracts were discussed and information was traded on future contract negotiation ideas. A social hour sponsored by Principal Financial Group was well attended.

The Unit 5 solidarity fund and charitable contribution monies were voted on and approved. ARC of Columbia County was presented with a check by Brother Martin Olson. The yearly Solidarity party was held at Bud's Pizza in Portage where members enjoyed chicken wings, pizza and refreshments after a well attended meeting.

Organizing of new union members is an on-going initiative being pushed by the International. While several businesses in the Unit 5 area are being looked at for the possibility of new membership recruitment, there is always the need for contact with any worker interested in the

possibility of being represented. Members with suggestions regarding possible organizing candidates are encouraged to forward them to the Union Office.

Holiday wishes to all Local 965 members!
In Solidarity,
Bruce Giese
Unit 5 Exec. Board Member and Unit Chairman
Columbia Chief Steward

Unit 7 Chair—Mark Schoen

First, from all of the members of Unit 7, we wish you a safe and happy holiday season. Be careful in your travels and around your home.

Unit 7 is currently sponsoring a full week of Madison's Fantasy in Lights. We are working from Wednesday, November 28 to Tuesday, December 4, 2007. Thanks to everyone who spent a few hours helping hand out candy canes and flyers during this time. All proceeds will be donated to local food pantries in the surrounding area. Unit 7 has also donated \$200 to local area food pantries this winter.

The December meeting will be a solidarity gathering right after the monthly meeting. If you missed the meeting this year, plan on coming in 2008. Our meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at the Madison Labor Temple at 1602 S. Park Street. Talk with your chief steward for details, call your unit chair, Mark Schoen at 669-5700, or call the union office for details. I'd like to challenge each and every one of you to attend one meeting in the next year for your local unit.

From Your Business Manager

I would like to start out by wishing everyone a Happy and Blessed New Year. No matter where you are in life, there should always be something to be thankful. First and foremost in my life, I have been blessed with my wonderful wife of over 22 years and three beautiful daughters. From there we move to being fortunate to be in good health and truly able to enjoy each and every day by making the most of each day no matter the good or bad. This to me is possible for many reasons.

First, the ability to grow up in a country founded on freedom. Not having to worry each day whether I would have food on my table. Not having to be deprived of a good education. And certainly having the ability to get an education in an area of my choosing that would allow me to pursue a career in a field that I chose. Along the way there were struggles, life lessons and a lot of hard work. We do not need to look too far to find less fortunate. In this country today, there is poverty, lack of a good education, limited or no health care and many other social challenges. If you move to other countries around the world you see both good and bad. Most of the bad I see is when there is a lack of freedom or democracy although that is not always the case.

By now most of you are wondering if I will ever get to the point (at least those of you that are still reading). I pointed to the above to lay the foundation for the topic of this article and that is "when is it enough to stand up".

When I finished with Technical College, I was hired by WPL at the Edgewater Generating Station in the operations department. At that time in my life I thought I had it all. I was making more money and had better benefits than anyone I knew that I graduated from High School with (except another person from my High School class that was also hired at Edgewater). I lay this out to make a point relative to other opportunities. I was also offered a full time position at Ariens Company, a manufacturing plant, as a welder/machinist with a wage 35% less than I would be making at WPL.

Additionally the benefits were substandard to those I was getting at WPL. On paper that seems like a significant difference. It was even worse than it appears. I had worked at Ariens for over 2 years as a part-time employee and was trained on welding, machining and press operations so the position I was offered was not entry level. The position at WPL was as a Semi-Skilled Laborer.

Why the big difference? At the time, I was 20 years old and I had no idea what the difference was. It was not until I became involved in the Union that I started to understand the difference. It did not take me long to begin to appreciate what the Union members had built by having a contract with WPL (and predecessor companies) since 1937.

As the years went on, I bid other positions within the WPL that took me to the Madison General Office and Northern Area. Along that path I became very active in the Union and became a Unit Chairperson/Chief Steward and an Executive Board member. It was then that I believed that some of the Union leadership was becoming complacent and I wanted to be more involved and do something about that concern. The membership elected me as President of our Union in 1992. It was at that time that I made a couple commitments to all of you and the future members of this Union. I committed that as long as the membership supported me, I would work every day to maintain the Union Difference. I then went back to school to get my Bachelor of Science in Business Administration so I would be better prepared to meet the challenges as a Union Leader. In 1998 I was appointed as the Assistant Business Manager of our Union. I replaced a long time friend and dedicated Union leader, Gene Samuelson. From 1998 until this year when I was first appointed and then elected by the members, I have seen many successes and likewise many challenges. The most difficult of those days was when I was subpoenaed and then testified in front of a Federal Grand Jury concerning others embezzling Union funds. It was not difficult telling the truth but rather knowing that this event would tarnish the public's perception of Unions.

That brings us to the year in review 2007. Since my appointment and election as your Business Manager/Financial Secretary there have been many changes and much work done. I will attempt to lay out those changes below.

- I would first thank Shawn Reents for his hard work and being the change agent that was needed to move IBEW Local Union 965 into the future. I wish him the best in his position in the International Office and hope to watch him make a difference among the top Union Leaders in Washington DC.
- As most of you remember, we were in the middle of Alliant negotiations at the time Shawn moved to the International Office, so we had to quickly make changes so we could meet the company head on at negotiations. In just a few short weeks we made it very clear to Alliant our position at negotiations. Within a few more weeks we had a tentative agreement and the membership ratified the contract prior to the expiration of the existing agreement.
- Upon completion of negotiations with Alliant, a review of the good and bad was completed and some decisions were made. First, a solidarity committee was formed of members across Alliant and will begin meeting in January 2008 to get us prepared for the next negotiations. Second, a membership participation committee was approved and a group of members was brought in to discuss various concerns with membership participation. Both of these you will hear more about in the coming months.
- We filed a lawsuit against Alliant/WPL when they changed the pre 65 retiree medical premiums without negotiating. The membership agreed to pick up the cost of the lawsuit with a \$1 per pay period assessment. We expect the case to be heard by the summer of 2008.
- Outside of Alliant contracts, we have been busy organizing new members and negotiating other contracts. We now have members that are Police Officers in addition to Utility workers, Cooperatives, Municipals and Manufacturing. We continue each day to find new organizing targets so we can maintain the Union difference. The more Union workers in America the larger voice working people have on issues that concern us.
- There have been some changes at the Union Office as well. Lori Richardson has taken over as our new Office Administrator with the resignation of the previous office administrator. Mike Pyne has been appointed as an Assistant Business Manager replacing me. Additionally we had

other appointments when Mike moved from the role as President. Rick Irwin – President, Holly Kaiser – Vice President and Deb Farrey – Recording Secretary.

- We have negotiated several agreements and are currently in negotiations at several locations.
 - Rock Energy Cooperative, Village of Sauk City, City of Fennimore – Successor Agreement
 - Village of Muscodia and Village of Muscodia Police – First Agreement
 - City of Reedsburg Craft and Non Craft, City of Cuba City, Everbrite, City of Richland Center Utility and Union Financial – Currently in negotiations.
- The last area I want to touch on is organizing. While most of us really don't have an understanding what organizing is all about because when we started working, the Union was already in place. However, since I have been around, Village of Muscodia Public Works, Utility and Police, Cuba City, Reedsburg Craft and Non Craft, Union Financial, Rock Energy, City of Fennimore and Mazomanie are all locations that were added since I have been an Assistant Business Manager and Business Manager. This is because of the hard work of individuals like Kemp Grutt, Mike Pyne, Shawn Reents and many others that have assisted in making this happen. The question is why is this important and the answer is simple – THE UNION DIFFERENCE. Let's take a case in point. We organized the City of Fennimore Utility. We negotiated a contract which eventually went to arbitration. At the conclusion of the arbitration, the City was required to pay over \$73,000 in back pay to the 7 members we organized. Every person in the bargaining unit received a substantial bump in pay. In another case, we organized the City of Cuba City Utility and we are in negotiations. The City appears to have concern about us organizing others in the City and we are being told they will be giving the non union employees very substantial wage increases effective January 2008 to try and keep them from joining the Union. The point being that if there was no Union pressure, the individuals would have most likely received 2 % or less wage adjustments like they did prior to us organizing the Utility workers.

So if at this point you really are still reading, I hope you are better able to understand the Union Difference and the need to organize the unorganized. Statistics show that Union Workers, on average, earn 30% more than non Union workers. If companies move their work from Union to non Union in order to save the 30% difference, it becomes increasingly difficult to continue to demand better wages. To separate the difference we need to do two things. First, we need to provide the best quality work and most efficient skilled workforce so that employers that hire Union workers know they are getting the best. Second we need to organize the unorganized to push the wages and benefits up for all.

If you read one of the newsletter articles a year or so ago it talked about the race to the bottom as employers chipped away by shifting work to non Union and providing substandard wages and benefits. If we all work together (As a UNION) we can make a difference and give to future workers the same difference that brought us to work at a Union employer. *It is enough to stand up!!!!*

In Solidarity,
Tony Bartels



Upcoming Events

11

Upcoming Unit and Union meetings/notices for January through March 2008:

Office Closed for New Years	Dec. 31 & Jan. 1
Unit 3—7:00 p.m. Beaver Dam	January 2
Unit 4—7:00 p.m. Sheboygan Labor Hall	January 2
Unit 6—7:00 p.m. Comfort Inn Mineral Point	January 2
Unit 2—7:00 p.m. Shortley's Lounge Reedsburg	January 3
Solidarity Committee 9:00 a.m. Room 109 Madison	January 7
Unit 1—7:00 p.m. Best Western Waupaca	January 8
Unit 7—6:30 p.m. Madison Labor Temple	January 8
Unit 5—7:00 p.m. Dino's Restaurant Portage	January 9
Unit 8—6:30 p.m. Beloit Marine Corps League	January 9
Executive Board—10:30 a.m.	January 16
Alliant Chief Stewards Meeting	January 17
Audit Committee	January 21
Unit 1—7:00 p.m. Best Western Waupaca	February 5
Unit 3—7:00 p.m. Berlin	February 6
Unit 4—7:00 p.m. Sheboygan Labor Temple	February 6
Unit 6—7:00 p.m. Eagle Creek Inn Fennimore	February 6
Unit 2—7:00 p.m. Anjero's Mauston	February 7
Unit 7—7:00 p.m. Madison Labor Temple	February 12
Unit 8—6:30 p.m. Beloit Marine Corps League	February 13
Unit 5—7:00 p.m. Dino's Restaurant Portage	February 13
Executive Board—10:30 a.m.	February 20
Unit 1—7:00 p.m. Best Western Waupaca	March 4
Unit 3—7:00 p.m. Fond du Lac Labor Temple	March 5
Unit 4—7:00 p.m. Sheboygan Labor Temple	March 5
Unit 6—7:00 p.m. Town Pump Cassville	March 5
Unit 2—7:00 p.m. Antigua Bay Wisconsin Dells	March 6
Daylight Savings Time Begins	March 9
Unit 7—7:00 p.m. Madison Labor Temple	March 11
Unit 8—6:30 p.m. Beloit Marine Corps League	March 12
Unit 5—7:00 p.m. Dino's Restaurant Portage	March 12
Executive Board—12:30 p.m.	March 19

Dates and times are subject to change

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