

LOCAL 506 UNION NEWS

Volume 63, Issue 10

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Friday, November 9, 2012

Annual Enrollment Extended

It has been brought to our attention that the Annual Enrollment for employees who were impacted by Hurricane Sandy will be extended to November 30, 2012.

Those residing in any of these areas CT, DE, MA, MD, Southern NY / Long Island, NJ, PA and WV can complete their enrollment by calling the Benefits Enrollment Center at (1-800-252-5259 or 1-904-443-6551) through November 30. If you or anyone you know has been affected by this hurricane, we certainly hope all is well.

Steward Classes Continue

UE Local 506 has been conducting classes for our stewards and any interested member throughout the year. These classes are held to educate our members on how to deal with issues that arise in the workplace.

This is truly a chance that you can become involved with your union and learn something that can not only help yourself, but others as well. Knowledge is power and understanding how unions operate and why unions are important should be important to all of us.

Getting involved only when it becomes personal would give the impression that you're in this alone. This is not what unions are all about and if everyone would start pulling together, then our voice will be heard loud and clear.

Eastern Region President **Deb Gornall**, along with Chief Plant Steward **Mike Hayes** has done

an excellent job with these sessions. We need each other more now than ever, so we encourage you to attend. All are welcome.

Holiday Schedule To Be Voted On

The holidays for 2013 will be voted on at this month's membership meetings. Below are the days and dates of the tentative schedule.

New Year's Day	Tuesday, January 1
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Monday, January 21
Good Friday	Friday, March 29
Memorial Day	Monday, May 27
Independence Day	Thursday, July 4
Labor Day	Monday, September 2
Veterans Day	Monday, November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 28
Day after Thanksgiving	Friday, November 29
Christmas Eve	Tuesday, December 24
Christmas Day	Wednesday, December, 25
One Floating Holiday - Requires Business Leader Approval	

November Membership Meeting Notice

Agenda:

- ☐ Vote for Eastern Region Delegates
- ☐ Vote on Holiday Schedule
- ☐ General Business
- ☐ Committee Reports

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS & TIMES ARE:

Thursday, November 15, 2012 (All meetings)
 7:20 a.m. (3rd Shift)
 1:00 p.m. (2nd Shift)
 3:20 p.m. (1st Shift)

Chief Plant Steward's Report

By Mike Hayes

First of all I'd like to share information about farmed-out work that has been brought back. Building #12 Machine shop, part #41C636651PI flingers have been brought back in. Building #12 Main Cab, the Dash 9 part #847X275456MLG4 back in.

The very first, number 2 Indo end cab, is now being built in Building 12 (formerly built at PSB). In Building #5, we have seen burn roll barrel weld, bullard, mill and drill work that has been brought back in.

Building #7 Machine shop farm out hours have dropped from 800 a week to 400. Thirty-one high voltage boxes have been brought back in.

Part #84E900258AEG1-100% brought back.

Building #18C part #84X275375ACG4, transfer high voltage cab scheduled to be brought back at the end of the 1st quarter of 2013. Part #17KG530C7-QR high voltage cab scheduled to be brought back at end of 1st quarter of 2013 also.

Building #6, several jobs are under review to bring back in 2013. Building #2 has frames that may come back due to the installation of new Okumas.

We are going to continue to have discussions with the company about bringing more farm-out work back to the Erie Plant. There are a lot of jobs out there I know we can do better than anyone.

Our next step two will be November 16th, and several step III cases have been submitted. By the way, there is a lot of things being said in the plant right now on what is going on with the business.

Everyone has a story. I hope there will be a good turn out at the November 15th meeting. Information about what is going on is still coming in, and the Union will stay committed to bringing work back in here for everyone!

Recent Local 506 Retiree

Benny R. Hill



President's Report

By Roger Zaczek

Everyone by now has been informed of Erie GE's decision to offer Voluntary Retirement Incentive, (VRI) to 75 people, 60 years old or older, with 10 or more years of service. This announcement is in conjunction with the elimination of Bldg. 12 OHV workers on 3rd shift.

A lot was learned from the lay-offs and bumping that happened in 2009. To me, it was messy.

The OHV announcement will hopefully be less messy with the openings being created by the 75 VRI folks. Most everyone understands the local lay-off and recall procedure, my concern is that the Jobs being vacated by the VRI, will be posted for everyone to bid on, and those jobs get filled.

There have been numerous meeting of late with the officers, the board, and the company, as you can well imagine. Ultimately, there has been NO discussion of any permanent lack of work. This is good. There has been some discussion of some areas experiencing Temporary lack of works (TLOW). Your Officers and Board have made it clear that those TLOWs should go to volunteers in the affected area first, then, by seniority. My guess will be that there will be no lack of volunteers.

The super storm "Sandy" has caused much distress for many folks up and down the East Coast. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all those who have suffered losses. UE Local 106, working for the Hess Corporation in New Jersey, has been impacted by the storm. As of this writing, the Board of the Eastern region is working on the details to help our sister local.

The one thing that I know for sure is that the Rank and File of the UE is willing to help those who have suffered, without hesitation...That makes me proud... Thank You.

National Election

Hopefully you voted in this year's election and as always, not everyone will be happy with the results. What matters most is that you took advantage of what many people died to achieve, "The Right to Vote".

Now it's time to move ahead and hope that those who were elected, will do what's best for the people and our country. "GOD BLESS AMERICA".

Benefit Question Asked

At last month's membership meeting the question was asked concerning how a TLOW would affect the FSA (Flexible Spending Account) and how would payments be collected. If you chose to enroll in the FSA which takes effect on January 1, 2013, you must be on active payroll. If you are not, here is the process.

- If the employee's lack of work (temporary or regular) means they are removed from active payroll and remain inactive on 1/1/13 as noted in your **Health Benefit Handbook, section 3.3.2**, the 2013 FSA will not be in effect.
- The 2013 AE (annual enrollment) an employee made during open enrollment **DOES NOT** automatically resume upon returning to work from inactive status.
- Upon returning to work, an employee must elect FSA for 2013 within 63 days and it is effective the return to work date, not 1/1/13.
- If a lack of work is temporary but the employee remains on active payroll, the 2013 AE election would commence as stated in the handbook and deductions would begin when the employee begins receiving pay again.

2013 Eastern Region Delegates to be Chosen

At this month's membership meetings, members will have the opportunity to decide who will represent them as delegates to the Eastern Region in 2013. By constitution, the three officers serve as delegates and seven others will serve as either delegates or alternate delegates.

The four (4) receiving the most votes will serve as delegates and the next three receiving the most votes will be alternate delegates. Here are the names of those who accepted their nomination.

Joe Smith	Dave Chadwell
Don Brown	Bryan Ledford
Norberto Lozada	Ron Dombkowski
Rick Steele	

**You must vote for
four (4) or your ballot will be void.**

Outrageous Attack on Non-Union Salaried Post-65 Insurance Benefits GE Announces It Will Eliminate Health and Life Insurance For Salaried Post-65 Retirees in 2015

Despite making unprecedented profits, the General Electric Company has announced to its salaried non-union employees that effective January 1, 2015 it will no longer offer post-65 health and life insurance benefits. According to GE, post-65 health and life benefits will be eliminated for all non-union salaried workers unless they have turned age 65 and retired on or before January 1, 2015.

Until notified of this latest attack on employee benefits, non-union GE salaried workers had been promised that health and life insurance would cover them for the duration of their retirement. Long service salaried workers trusted that GE would keep its promise to maintain these benefits through their retirement. By announcing its plan to eliminate these benefits, GE has broken its commitments to these employees.

According to GE, the plans which will be eliminated for non-union salaried workers are: **GE Medical Plan for Pensioners (GMPP)**, **GE Hospital Indemnity Plan (GHIP)**, **GE Medical Insurance Plan (GMIP)**, the **GE Pensioner's Prescription Drug Plan (GDPDP)** and the **GE Retiree's Life Insurance Plan**.

Retiree and Health Insurance Cuts Do Not Apply to UE Members

Because our post-65 retiree health and life insurance plans are governed by the UE-GE National Agreement which is in effect through June 21, 2015, GE cannot cut, eliminate, or modify our retiree health care plans at this time. Of course by attacking non-union salaried retiree life and medical benefits, GE is signaling its intention to take aim on unionized retiree benefits during the next contract negotiations.

UE-GE Conference Board Secretary **Gene Elk** called the salaried cuts outrageous, stating that "UE will mobilize its members to fight any retiree benefits cuts during the next contract negotiations. GE's attempts to destroy retiree medical benefits are outrageous and unwarranted." Elk charged: "GE's billions in profits can be used to pay more than \$1 million per year during the next 10 years to its former vice-chairman, but the company is now poised to throw its retirees onto the scrap heap when they need medical benefits the most, after age 65."

Building 7 Report

By Chief Steward Bill Crawford

When I started working at GE some 22 years ago, I had never worked in a union shop before. I grew up in strong union based family, so I understood the principles about the union. The first principle I learned was to **take pride in your work**, making a quality part, in a timely manner.

I hear all the time "what is the union going to do about it"? All of us, every dues paying member, are union. It seems like some people are more concerned about working overtime than anything else, and it's not whether we work overtime or not, but that it is divided as evenly as possible. We spend way too much time arguing with each other, instead of worrying about protecting each other. We cannot throw away good jobs because we are forgetting our basic principles of protecting our jobs. I truly believe all of us should be very proud of what we do; we are only one of a few places in the United States that build freight Locomotives and that to me is one of the coolest things in the world.

Anyone can blame management for our problems. I prefer to find a solution to get the job done and protect these jobs, now and in the future. Anyone can blame others for their problems, but at the end of the day a Locomotive needs to be built. There are thousands of parts in a Locomotive, and each building has responsibility for the finished product. Every Union Member should realize that each building is as important as the next at accomplishing these tasks.

In closing, to put it simply, **GO TO WORK, TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR JOB, WHILE YOU CONTINUE TO COLLECT THE FAMILY SUBSTAINING PAY-CHECK THAT THE UNION FOUGHT FOR.**



Toy Drive Now Under Way

This year's Toy Drive is now underway. The drive started in October and will conclude on December 4th. As some of you might know, there is still a need in this community and other communities as well who need help. Erie still has a high poverty rate and we're sure it doesn't stop here.

Hopefully, you will continue to take part in this endeavor that will no doubt bring a smile to some child's face. Toys or donations can be given to your chief stewards or dropped off at the union hall. We thank you in advance for your participation.

Trail of Treats a Success

Thanks to all the members who contributed to the "Trail of Treats" that took place at the Millcreek Mall on the 24th and 25th. Once again, when called upon, this Local proves time and time again that helping the community is something that we do.

Special thanks to our members who spent their time to make this endeavor a success. If you see **Tom Skwaryk, John Caputo, Bill Crawford, Kevin Ireson** or **Jason Trayer**, give them a pat on the back. Thanks to **Sean Lynch** (retiree) and **Mackenzie**, Jason's daughter who helped out.



T-E-X-A-S

By B.A. Wayne Burnett

By now everyone should know that UE did not build the plant in Fortworth, Texas. UE had no input or was ever contacted by the company to get our permission if they should or could build that plant. As a matter of fact, UE has never had a say as to where GE spends their money or what country they spend it in. All we know is that you make it for them and they spend it.

If UE had that kind of say so, you wouldn't be reading this article. We don't believe anything would have swayed GE's decision not to build in Texas. You can put whatever spin you want as to why and you would probably be correct, but we can assure you that \$\$\$ was a major factor, but not the only factor.

But make no mistake about it, there are many other reasons why the company made that decision. It's a lot deeper than what is on the surface and we should pay close attention as to what is going on here. Some people would like to lay the blame on UE even though they know the truth. If you want to point the finger, then point it at the ones who made this decision. It wasn't made by UE Local 506.

Maybe if our political leaders would have broached the subject with GE as to what they could do to prevent what's happening, then maybe they could have changed the company's mind. It's obvious that Texas had something to offer GE and it was obviously an offer they couldn't refuse.

Our union did reach out to some of our politicians and for those who responded, their main concern seemed to be what UE could do for GE. Well if the first three quarters of the year didn't give you an ideal of what UE Local 506 has done for this company, then you better wake up. We consider the building of that facility as an attack not only to UE Local 506, but to the community as well.

When the company made the announcement back in 2011 that they were building in Texas, some thought that it was just talk. They first offered Lynn, Mass to take part in this endeavor, but offered them sub-standard wages which the employees flat out refused. They also wanted to tie the aviation division of the company into the mix which would have further eroded the gains and

rights that were achieved over the years.

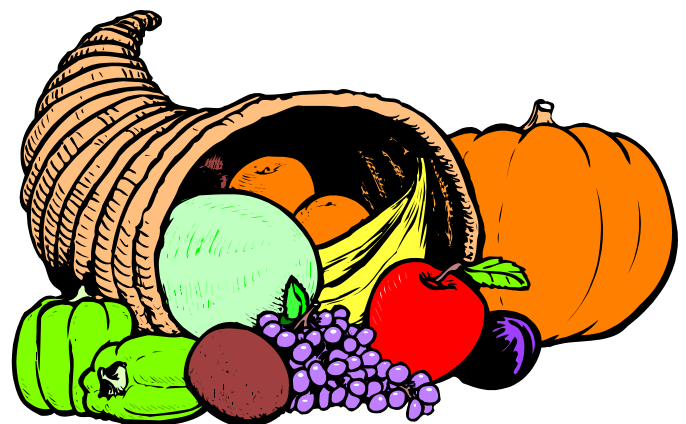
So now you understand that this is reality brothers and sisters and unfortunately, UE won't be able to X Texas out in any way, form or fashion. They are a production plant that will eventually be capable of doing everything that is done in this Erie plant. The OHV wheels that are being produced in Texas right now is just the beginning of this book. The script is still being written and who knows what the ending will be.

As I stated earlier, you can draw your own conclusions and you will probably be correct. The one thing we do know is that UE 506 employees are second to none at building the best products. Once again, UE Local 506 was never asked our thoughts about building the Texas plant or moving the top echelon from Erie to Chicago.

Don't kid yourself; there will be those in the community who will blame UE for what's taking place right now and sadly, some in our own ranks will feel the same way. If you are a 506'er, and feel that way, ask yourself these questions. How many local leaders or politicians did you contact when you heard they were building in Texas? Who are you calling now and who are you blaming? What part did you play or didn't play that could of changed the game?

We (all of us) have a responsibility to keep everyone gainfully employed and not go through a repeat of 2009. DO YOU REMEMBER? And one final comment. UE doesn't hire, fire or lay-off and by the way, UE didn't call Texas an overflow plant; GE did.

Happy Thanksgiving



Safety (WE DO CARE)

In response to the recent correspondence concerning safety, this is our feelings on the subject. We know that there has been and continues to be a number of injuries which occur on a weekly basis.

We, without a doubt, are always concerned when individuals get injured on the job and we don't believe that anyone comes to work to get hurt. It's truly unfortunate when someone gets hurts here just as it would be if you're injured or involved in an accident outside of the workplace.

It was stated that the "safety coordinators have agreed to step forward and play a major role in improving our safety". Well, this is the very reason why UE got involved in the safety program from the very beginning. If the company is frustrated by these injuries as we are, then think of our frustration when safety hazards are pointed out but don't get acted on. These are some of the things we hear.

I agree that we must be more vigilant when it comes to safety, but everyone should not be painted with the same brush. There are hundreds of employees who have never been hurt on the job and some went their whole careers without getting hurt.

So while it is a good thing to look out for each other when it comes to safety, it alternately falls on the individual whose mindset should be on ones that are important to them as they continue to work safely.


Help Still Available

Let's remember that if you are experiencing or having difficulty with someone in the workplace, we have people who are willing to listen and help you if you are willing to use them.

If you use our people, then maybe the situation can be rectified, but when the company gets involved, it becomes a crap shoot. We would only hope that whatever avenue you use, that you would consider the consequences of that decision.

If your problem is of a personal nature that may not be job related, then we suggest that you contact **Keith Eller**, the EAP Counselor at (875-4327). Call the union hall if you desire to take advantage of our help at (899-3108).

DECEMBER 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12 618 Membership Meeting R.A.G.E. Membership Meeting	13	14	15
16	17	18 E-Board Meeting	19	20 506 Membership Meetings	21 First Day of Winter	22
23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas	26	27	28	29
30	31 New Year's Eve					

AA Meeting Schedule

Where: Building 6, Room 150, Conference Room
When: Thursdays

1 st Shift	12:00 noon
2 nd Shift	7:30 pm
3 rd Shift	3:00 am

Change of Address Form

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

Local

Return To: The Union Hall • 3923 Main Street • Erie, PA 16511