



# LOCAL 506 UNION NEWS

Volume 63, Issue 5

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Friday, May 18, 2012

## Constitutional Amendments to Be Discussed and Voted On

At this month's membership meetings, there will be discussion and voting on proposed constitutional amendment changes that were submitted in March as well as a new proposal that is not currently in the constitution.

The non-constitutional proposal reads: "It should be written that we the members agree that a retired UE 506 member should **NOT** be allowed to return to work in Union jobs as an outside contractor, including training purposes. We need to preserve our Union Jobs to our Union Workers".

The addition to this proposal would read: "If they are requested to come back to work for GE, GE would need to hire them as a new UE/GE employee".

Under Article II, Section 2 reads: " This Union shall meet at least once each month. Notices of all meetings shall be printed in the Union's official publication. Only members in good standing shall be admitted. This shall include General Officers and Staff Representatives".

The proposed change would read: " This Union shall meet at least once each month. Notices of all meetings **and any issue to be voted on** shall be printed in the Union's official publication. Only members in good standing shall be admitted. This shall include General Officers and Staff Representatives".

The final proposal is under Article V, Section 10, paragraph 3 which reads: "Any day within fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the election, absentee ballots for those members scheduled for temporary

military leave, can be obtained, in person, at the Local 506 office during normal business hours, provided they present a copy of their orders". When picking up the ballot the member must sign for it.

The change would read: "Any day within fifteen (15) days prior to the date of any election, or contract voting, absentee ballots for those members

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## Former Officer Passes

The Officers and the Executive Board would like to express our condolences to the family of **Jim Jaroski** who passed away on May 11<sup>th</sup>. Jim served this local for many years and in many capacities.

He was the Chief Steward of building 2 for many years and was relentless when defending the rights of the people he represented. He then took that fight to another level after being elected as Chief Plant Steward. Jim was a strong union man who lead by example and was respected by both his peers and the company. He will surely be missed by all who knew him.

## May Membership Meeting Notice

### Agenda:

- Discuss and vote on Constitutional Amendments
- General Business
- Committee Updates

### MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS & TIMES ARE:

Thursday, May 24, 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*

On May 1<sup>st</sup> we had our Step II meeting and 29 cases were heard, including discipline, farm-outs and overtime. We ended up with 15 hold cases, 7 were closed and 7 letters were requested.

Unfortunately, discipline is at an all time high and we spend a lot of time working on these cases. Issues like this, is the reason why we are having steward's classes, which are very important. We need to be well educated when it comes to dealing with aggressive discipline.

On June 12<sup>th</sup> we are going to have more stewards' classes. I would like to see all stewards and alternate stewards attend these classes as well as any interested member. There is a wealth of information that's shared at these meetings. This gives us a better understanding on how to deal with the problems we face daily and it brings the stewards system closer together and the membership will be better informed.

We have the company's positions from the April 19<sup>th</sup> Step III which I will share with you at the May 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. June 1<sup>st</sup> will be our next Step II meeting and our next Step III meeting date has not been scheduled.

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## Medical Plan Questions

If you have questions concerning the medical plan and you can't find the information in the benefit books you received, please call **Leo Grzegorzewski** (ext. 5213), **Steve Hyzer** (ext. 3692) or the union hall (899-3108). We will make every effort to answer your questions or lead you in the right direction to get them answered.

Here is a list of other numbers that you may want to consider using also: (HealthAmerica: 1-866-838-9374), (UnitedHealthcare: 1-800-551-2445), (GE Benefits Center: 1-800-252-5259), (Dental-MetLife: 1-888-529-8474), (Vision-Davis Vision: 1-800-433-9375), (CVS Caremark: 1-800-509-9891), (GE Employee Assistance Program: 1-866-272-6007, option 1), or (Health Coach: 1-866-272-6007, option 2). We will continue to update you with any information that we might receive.

## President's Report

*By Roger Zaczyk*

A lot has been going on since last months membership meeting, the UE/GE conference board meeting, the Eastern region bi-yearly meeting, the Railroad Workers United convention in Chicago, ILL., which kicked off the Labor Notes conference, and then the GEB meeting in Pittsburgh to discuss the business of the National and the Plan for getting out of deficit spending.

A note of special Thanks to Eastern Region President, **Deb Gornall**, for assisting Chief Plant Steward **Mike Hayes** with steward's classes and agreeing to continue as long as the members want, there always is a need to Educate, Educate, and Educate.

I would also like to thank Brother **Chris Townsend** from the UE Washington office who I consider our UE Political Strategist, for speaking to the members in April, and Brother **Gene Elk**, for updating all of us on what he believes the challenges will be going into the future.

I look forward to this months membership meetings, because true Rank and File democracy will be demonstrated when the proposed constitutional amendments get discussed and voted on.

Looking ahead, there will have to be some discussion on the date for July's membership meeting, because of the Holiday and the scheduled shut-down, the day selected will be challenging. Maybe an all inclusive Sunday meeting.....

Memorial Day, May 28<sup>th</sup> is the next scheduled holiday and it would behoove all of us to commemorate all the fallen soldiers who have given their lives. Thank You.

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## Healthcare Tidbit

Just a small reminder; your "Bank of America" card holding your HRA (Health Reimbursement Account) cannot be used for dental or vision. However, if you have put additional money toward a FSA (Flexible Spending Account) that's included in your card, it can be used for those purposes. Remember that anytime that **you** pay for any service, keep your receipts in case you need them for future reference.

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scheduled for temporary military leave, or work for the company out of town, can be obtained, in person, at the Local 506 office during normal business hours, provided they present a copy of their orders or informal contact from supervisor". When picking up the ballot the member must sign for it.

As always, the members have the final say as whether to accept or reject any proposal or issue concerning this union.

## Safety

The first summer holiday is on its way and now that the weather is getting nice, everyone will begin to pursue all the outdoor activities that they love. Many people travel so it's important that you and your family wear seat belts. Buckling up can save 17,000 lives annually, so use them no matter how short or long your trip might be.

Another important tip is to check your tires, making sure they are properly inflated and in good condition for they are vital to the comfort, handling, and safety of your vehicles and gives you better gas mileage. Don't forget to check the spare, making sure that it also is in the proper condition in case you need it. Following these tips can relieve stress as you travel this summer.

Memorial Day also marks the unofficial start of the boating season. Not everyone is required to take a boater's safety course, but doing so has many advantages, especially if you are new to this kind of recreation. Last year's fatal boating accident serves as a reminder as to what can happen and why knowledge in safety and operation is important.

Everyone, (regardless of age) should be in a PFD while on board a boat. If you are a boater, sign up for the Safe Boating Day at Dobbins Landing on June 2<sup>nd</sup> to make sure your vessel complies with all safety standards.

When grilling, if you use gas or propane, make sure to check for leaks and make sure there are no cracks in any hose connections. Always use precaution when doing any kind of grilling and once you are finished, make sure everything is put in its proper place. Never leave a filled tank inside a car or trunk and turn off all valves. Whatever your plans are for the summer, make sure that you are thinking about safety!

## Building 18 & 42 Report

*By Chief Steward Tom Skwaryk*

First of all, I would personally like to welcome all new members to UE 506. If you're new to a union, please take advantage of the steward classes or attend one of the membership meetings held here at the union hall each month.

Work has been pretty steady in 18c and 42 and with an upturn in OHV, the company's goal is to reach 5 billion in 5 years. We want the work to stay right here in Erie and not go to any other facility where ever it may be including Ft. Worth.

Farm-outs continue to be an issue up and down the avenue and a major issue for us is the constant revisions to the V-Speed harnesses in Aux Cab. We are constantly changing them on the fly and 99% of the time we are reactionary instead of being proactive. This is something that the company should take more control of.

As summer fast approaches and the weather heats up, tempers on the shop floor may also rise. If you have a conflict with someone, please use our available resources, (stewards, myself, or the unity council) to help defuse the situation before going to the boss. This union has fought for 75 years to get where we are today with a great standard of living and to provide for our families. Don't throw it away by letting a moment of anger change your life.

On the topic of job bidding: once you bid and get hired on a new job, you must go back to the job posting board and acknowledge that you have accepted the job. Telling the boss that you want the job is not securing the job through the employment office. Many jobs have been lost or refused because the process has not been completely followed. If you are a new employee and have never used the system, then ask someone and I'm sure they will be glad to help you. Finally, I would like to wish everyone a happy and safe shutdown.

### Change of Address Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Local \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Eastern Region Report

*April 28, 2012 – By RZ*

Monroeville, Pa. was the meeting place for the Eastern Region Executive Board meeting and the Regional meeting. Out of 38 Locals that could attend, 19 Locals sacrificed their weekend for the bi-annual meeting.

It was voted to have the next meeting in Wilkesboro, Pa. in October. The Executive Board will meet Friday 10/19, and the Regional meeting will convene on Saturday 10/20.

The meeting started out with updates on recent organizing campaigns, most notably the Labor Board conducted elections in New Jersey and Ohio, for the Renzenberger Drivers.

Locals then reported on the goings on in their respective workplace. Interesting is the various schemes employers use for dividing the members. From companies taking advantage of the business being in a down turn to implementing "Witness reports", to using customer comments for discipline. UE National President **Bruce Klipple** then reported. "We are literally fighting for Union survival; the Right has declared a war on working people. **Romney** has said that the "reform of State workers, must expand to the Federal Government workers." War on the Workers."

President Klipple then reminded the members of what **James Matles**, former Director of organizing (1937-1962) and General Secretary Treasurer (1962-1975) for the National once said "The ability of the young, with the wisdom of the old, gives you an unbeatable force."

The chant "WHO ARE WE...UE!" and "Never give up, Never give in" resonated from the floor.

Elections for 2012/2013 Officers and the executive board commenced and the results are: President, **Deb Gornall**, Vice President, **Angonza Laughinhouse**, Local 150, Secretary Treasurer, **Roger Zaczyk**, Local 506, and Recording Secretary, **Nina Williams**, Local 799. **Don Brown**, Local 506, was again elected Eastern Region Trustee, and **Matt McCracken** was elected as Regional Executive Board Member.

14 Executive Board Members were then elected and 506's Matt McCracken was re-elected. 506 Unity Committee member Don Brown was again elected as Regional Trustee.

A special thanks to **Tim Newara**, **Dave Chadwell**,

**Tom Skwaryk**, **Brian Welch**, **Scott Slawson**, **Don Brown**, **Matt McCracken**, and **Leo Grzegorzewski**, for proudly representing Local 506.

Feel free to ask any Delegate from 506 on what they got out of the meeting, some for the first time.

## Labor Notes Conference - May 4-6, 2012

*Mark Haller contributing report*

This years LABOR NOTES was the largest attended to date. 1500 "TROUBLE MAKERS" had a week-end of classes, sessions, and action. The UE was well represented by folks from across the country.

Fridays Railroad Workers United convention, of which I have been an associated member, was very informative and important because all the trades from across the country share knowledge and discuss issues, and set policy through resolutions. Our association with the RWU is very important to both the UE National Office, as well as our own local.

Saturday's first session for me was on Direct Action. This session, dealt with actions by protesters that violates a law or laws, like trespassing or marching without a permit. The most important lesson I came away with was how to prevent a conspiracy charge from being brought against the protesters involved in the planning and coordination of the action. Joining the picket line and marching in support of the HYATT hotel workers a few blocks away was energizing.

The afternoon session, OCCUPY and LABOR, covered the different ways the various Unions had worked with the Occupations in their areas.

The next session, LOGISTIC WORKERS MEETING, led by UE's Mark Meinster of the Western Regions office, included RWU, Warehouse Workers for Justice, and other groups that move material around the nation.

This years Troublemakers Award was presented to our affiliate, Warehouse Workers for Justice, for their continued hard work at bringing attention to the needs of hard working people in that industry.

Sunday I attended another session on OCCUPY and LABOR, followed by DIGITAL STRATEGY. The digital session focused on how to use the different methods of communicating in the NEW MEDIA, from Twitter and Facebook, to the Homepage on the Internet.

## Conference Board Meeting

By *B.A. Wayne Burnett*

On April 20<sup>th</sup>, our local hosted the GE Conference Board meeting. **Gene Elk**, (Secretary GE Conference Board), along with UE National President **Bruce Klipple**, Eastern Region President **Debbie Gornall**, and International Representative **Chris Townsend** were also in attendance.

The purpose of the meeting is to keep us informed as to what is going on around the country and other GE affiliated shops. Bruce gave a report on the CBC meeting that took place in Philadelphia, PA. and his thoughts on why the meeting was important. Unions and the middle class are being attacked all over the country.

With the ever increasing rise in companies moving to right to work states, it is important that we cross state lines and join forces with workers who have the same mindset as us. We must reach out, educate, and organize those who are looking for a better way and defend against these attacks.

Bruce also informed us that discipline was running rampant throughout the GE chain. There's no doubt that we've had our share as well as (it seems) everyone else's share. This is why we constantly remind you to be careful and mindful of what you do.

Gene has been traveling cross country getting acquainted with other UE locals and has hit the ground running since taking over for **Steve Tormey**. He is finding out that these locals are having some of the very same issues that we are encountering, including some confusion concerning the "Bank of America" card issued by the company. He also gave us a breakdown of the health plan choices made by UE locals across the country. We discussed how the pension contributions plan works for new employees hired in 2012.

He's been in the lone star state of Texas and has eyed the plant that the company is planning to put into operation in the near future. This is an opportunity for UE to reach out and educate the future workers of that plant on the importance of belonging to a union, while remembering that they are not our enemies.

Chris Townsend, who spoke at our April meet-

ing, is as keen as ever when it comes to knowing what is happening not only in Washington DC, but also has connections all over the country and keeps us well informed as to what is happening in other GE locations that do some of the same work that we do.

He is very political minded and knows all the lobbying that takes place in DC and how much these companies spend to further their cause. I don't need to tell you that you are employed by one that is near the top of that list. It was also interesting to find out some of the similarities between GE and our competitors during that Friday meeting. If you pay really close attention, you could almost get the impression that these companies are, well using one of GE's slogans "Imagination at Work" and how they may be more than just competitors.

We heard reports from Locals 618 and 332 as well as what our local (506) have been experiencing. Angel and Scott reported that there have been a few new hires at their plant in Fort Edward, NY. They stated that the company has mentioned on a couple of occasions the word two-tier. Needless to say, it didn't seem to go over too well. There were complaints about how the company mismanages in some areas and doesn't take the responsibility for their own actions, but are willing to put the blame on the workers. Have you heard that before?

Local 618 is short handed and could use more people. The company wants to bring back some retirees, but hiring new employees would be a better fit. There are other concerns that need to be worked out internally and hopefully they will work themselves out.

As for our local, we've had new hires, Chief Steward's elections, a dues increase and stewards classes. We also have a host of problems with the main one being the amount of discipline and dismissals that seem to take place on a daily basis. We would be remiss in not mentioning what a great job that Debbie Gornall (Eastern Region President) has done educating our stewards.

The stewards system is the first line of defense and the more educated they are, the more they will be able to handle situations when confronted with them. These classes can be attended by any member and we encourage all who are interested to do so. There will be another class on the **12<sup>th</sup> of June**.

## Rumorville USA

Did you hear that there will be eight days in a week, or that time will now be the same all over the world? Or maybe you heard that summer will be by-passed here in Erie and we will go directly into fall. How about this one: instead of getting older on your birthday, you can now stay the same age that you are now.

These may sound ridiculous and far fetched, but once rumors start flowing, there's no turning them off. With today's technology, all it takes is a flip of a button or putting one's own spin on something seen or heard that get these rumors started. It has got to be true because it was in the news and so and so said it.

Well as grown-ups, (I think) we should be more careful as to what we listen to and make sure that before we pass that info to someone else, that we do everything we can to verify it. Unfortunately, nobody will ever be able to stop rumors, but how you handle what you see or hear makes all the difference in the world. Consider the source of your information. Now there may be times when rumors come to pass and if they do, make sure you didn't plant the seed to turn a rumor into reality.

## Sport Shorts

Your Sports Committee is following a busy Spring with a busy Summer and Fall. We have an Allegheny River canoe trip planned for July 25th, followed on July 28th by a Seawolves game and picnic. All you golfers keep August 19th open for the 5th annual Welcome Home "Fore" Veterans Golf Tournament at Riverside Golf Course. We are currently planning another paintball outing for late October/early November. Watch for posters and applications



## AA Meeting Schedule

Where: Building 6, Room 150, Conference Room  
 When: Thursdays, 1<sup>st</sup> Shift 12:00 noon  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Shift 7:30 pm  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Shift 3:00 am

JUNE 2012						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6 L.A.C. MEETING	7	8	9
10	11	12 STEWARDS CLASS 7:20 AM 1:30 PM 3:20 PM	13 R.A.G.E. MEMBER- SHIP MEETING	14 Flag Day	15	16
17 Father's Day	18	19 E-BOARD MEETING	20 618 MEMBER- SHIP MEETING	21 506 MEMBER- SHIP MEETINGS	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29 R.A.G.E. BOARD MEETING	30

## RECENT LOCAL 506 RETIREES



**John Hinkle**  
**Sybil D. Black**  
**James W. Smalley**

**Phillip W. Anderson**  
**Catherine A. Slomski**

## Reminder: Help is Available

We want to continuously remind you that if you feel the need to talk to someone concerning workplace problems or personal problems, remember we have a Unity Committee that deals with worker on worker problems and also the EAP (Employee Assistance Program) for more complex issues.

Call the union hall if you want Unity Committee Involvement at 899-3108 or you can contact EAP Counselor **Keith Eller** at 875-4327. Either option is an asset to this membership, so please use them.