

# LOCAL 506 UNION NEWS

Volume 64, Issue 2

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Friday, February 15, 2013

## UE Eastern Region News

All sub regions of the Eastern region will be meeting during the month of March.

UE Local 506 belongs to sub region #1, and Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, UE Local 506 will host the bi-annual meeting. Updates on what is going on in the Eastern region, along with how the region is doing per capita wise, and where this region is going, along with the recommendations of the Eastern Region Executive Board, will all be discussed.

Elected delegates to the Eastern Region, together with board members and interested membership are all welcomed to attend.

The meeting will start at 9:00 am sharp, hoping to conclude around 1:00 pm.

## Kevin Ireson Elected to E-Board

**Kevin Ireson** was elected to replace **Tim Newara** as Executive Board Member at Large. Kevin has been instrumental in a number of areas within the union, including the Unity Committee, EAP, (Employee Assistance Program) and also spearheads the yearly Toy Drive. This position will be up for re-election as well as all other offices in this month general election nominations.

### *In Sympathy*

The Officers and Executive Board of UE Local 506 wish to extend our sincere condolences to the families and friends of any 506 members that may be mourning the loss of a loved one.

## General Election Nominations

Nominations for the General Election of Officers will take place at this month's membership meetings. The following offices are open to any member in good standing according to Constitution and By-Laws of Local 506.

They are Business Agent, President, Chief Plant Steward, Vice President/Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant-At-Arms, Executive Board Member at Large (3) to be elected and Trustee (2) to be elected. With the exception of the trustees (four year term), all other offices will run from April 2013 until October, 2014. This change was made due to a constitutional amendment approved by the members in 2012.



General Election

March 21, 2013

## February Membership Meeting Notice

### Agenda:

- Nominations of General Election of Officers
- Selecting Alternate Tellers for General Election
- General Business Matters and Committee Updates

### MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS & TIMES ARE:

Thursday, February 21, 2013 (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 January 25<sup>th</sup> we had our Step II Negotiation Meeting and fifty-five cases were heard. The cases involved overtime, transfer of work to Texas, payment, Farm-outs and unjust discipline. After many talks with the Company about farm-out, we should have a lot of it coming back in the second quarter. Hopefully when that happens, there will be movement in the bumping procedure.

Because of the permanent Lack of Work given in Building #12 OHV and due to the Transfer of Work to Texas there will be a lot of discussion on this issue at the February Membership Meeting.

National Representative Gene Elk will be here to report on Transfer of Work issues that were discussed with the Company at a corporate level. More talks will take place at a local level on transfer of work on locomotives.

# Healthcare Clarification on FSA and Related Healthcare Info

As noted in last month's news, those involved in the FSA (Flexible Spending Account) have until March of this year to use any left over funds. The actual date is March 15, 2013. On another note, some employees received new insurance cards while others did not.

New cards may have been issued due to a change in group number or plan option/type. This may result from a change in tier coverage (1 person, 2 person or 3 or more), changing election from HRA/HSA options 1, 2, or 3 or for employees who move between plans.

It was also brought up that doctors' offices are asking employees to present their insurance card (new or old) when seeking treatment. Your card is valid whether you received a new one or not. This is done to protect you against consumer fraud or healthcare identity theft. The following link will explain why this might happen. <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/redflagsrule/index.shtml>

# President's Report

By Roger Zaczyk

The announcements by GE toward the end of January 2013, does not come as a surprise for some. The "restructuring" of the Apparatus/ Service division, along with the closing of what was left of the Lamp division in Ohio, will have a devastating impact on "good paying, family sustaining jobs".

The vaguely worded message from GE's Vice President of service Operations forecasted the intent to restructure service offerings for Thermal Repair and Industrial Repairs network, can only lead one to believe, GE is at it again.

Every year I have observed that divisions in the GE that do marginal, profit wise, go thru a restructuring or combination with other divisions, to boost the bottom line. This is the corporate way.

The question now is "what has that got to do with Erie?"

The Lawrence Park GE performed better than expected. Because of your hard work and determination, Not only was this division honored with the GE business of the year, but record profits and customer commitments were made!

So why Texas? Why supplement on a proven money maker? I could fill this article with numerous answers, but those who have to be told why, are in for a ride. From the first OHV to the completed First locomotive, Texas is doing what was always considered Erie work. "As long as GE is making locomotives, Erie will build them". Those words spoken by GE CEO's, gave all of us a future, as well as reassuring the Erie community of GE's commitment to Northwestern Pa. The desire to reap even greater profits, because of an internal corporate decision, will have a long lasting impact.

**AA Meeting Schedule**

**Where: Building 6, Room 150, Conference Room**

**When:**  
**Thursdays**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Shift</b>	<b>12:00 noon</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Shift</b>	<b>7:30 pm</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Shift</b>	<b>3:00 am</b>

## Safety

Are we really safe or just lucky? It seems anymore that we are really underestimating the importance of safety in our lives. How many people read the warnings on the first pages of an instruction manual or even read the manual? How many know what they should be doing but choose not to for whatever reason?

Even when it's mandated, how many abide? Take seatbelts for example. We know it's the law and that they save lives, but pay attention the next time you're driving and take note of the many drivers who are not wearing them. Do they make them uncomfortable? Imagine a lifetime of discomfort from an injury that may have resulted from being involved in an accident because you chose not to wear one.

What is it going to take for you to start taking safety seriously wherever you are? Unsafe acts are like a carcinogen, slowly building up and affecting our behavior until you get the bad news. On any given day in the workplace, you can see how some people go about doing their jobs with complete complacency. Did they have proper training and guidance?

Sometimes your mind may be elsewhere and unfortunately, people in today's society are afraid to constructively criticize others concerning safety for fear of hurting their feelings or getting into a confrontation. So rather than saying something, we find it easier to just walk on by. Just remember, however you choose to cruise through life, think about if you are cruising the safe way or are you just lucky.

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## Safety Coordinators Concerns

On Thursday, February 7, the safety coordinators met with the executive board and discussed some concerns they feel need closer attention. We know that the company always starts any presentation with safety and what it means to work in the safest way possible and we (the union) don't disagree with that.

However, some coordinators (if not all) believe that there are a number of workers who are not reporting injuries that may occur on the shop floor.

This should never happen, and if you don't report an injury in a timely matter, then you may jeopardize any benefits you may be entitled to relating to an injury.

Another issue is the way employees feel they are personally treated when going to the medical center and would rather stay away. Don't be intimidated! This is your livelihood you're dealing with. Other concerns include lack of communication, not being able to give refresher info or mandated training when needed or due, standard work, (for coordinators) what OP (Operation Prevention) means and how it works and also the conditions of some restrooms.

With VPP looming, these concerns should not be taken lightly and if we truly want to be safe and work in a safe environment, then we're sure these concerns as well as others not mentioned will be addressed.

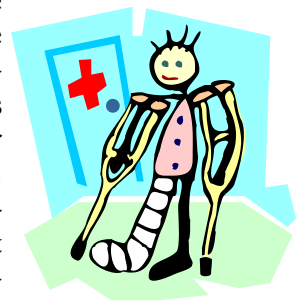
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## Medical Center Concerns

If you are injured on the job, you must report it ASAP to your supervisor or to the medical center. This is for your own benefit. There have been so many problems with workplace injuries and we want to make sure that you cover your backside if you get hurt or injured while working.

Any delay may jeopardize a work comp claim. We've heard many stories and concerns about how employees may be personally treated or the treatment they receive, but those concerns can be addressed at a later time. Don't give the company the opportunity to say that your injury didn't happen here or is not work related. Only answer the questions concerning your injury.

The medical center has the responsibility to inform and supply you with a list of workers comp doctors you must treat with for ninety (90) days. Don't be intimidated or influenced by anyone concerning not reporting an injury because there have been too many and we don't believe anyone comes to work to get hurt.



## U.S. Department of Labor Official Visits Union Hall

On January 31, **Kevin Smallwood**, an official from the U.S. Department of Labor paid Local 506 a visit. This visit was prompted because of some concerns that were brought to their attention during the 2011 General Election.

His visit was well received and the E-Board along with current election committee members had the opportunity to hear and ask questions concerning union elections. **Debbie Gornall**, the Eastern Region President was also in attendance.

Kevin answered many questions on how elections should be run according to the law and the importance of following the constitution of the local if one exists. The issue of notification was one of the concerns and whether or not all eligible members (working or not) were notified in a timely manner of the election. Some others questions concerned the rules as to how, when and where those running for office could campaign, access to member information, the responsibility of the election committee and various other issues.

For many years now, this local has run all kinds of elections, including the general election, chief steward, steward, delegate elections, special elections and even run-off elections. We bring Mr. Smallwood's visit up simply because it's important for members to know that this union has always did everything to make sure everyone has an opportunity to run or hold office.

Mr. Smallwood thanked this local for inviting him to come and see how this local operates and left satisfied with our process. Remember, there are other processes within our constitution that need to be followed, also. Read it in its entirety.

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## Co-Worker Relationships that Work

Unless you're living in a cave, you'll probably work with other people at some point in your life. Workplace interactions can be interesting and enjoyable or they can be disappointing and frustrating. Your experience of them is entirely up to you.

The following suggestions may help in having good co-worker relationships.

1. **Set a motivating example for your co-workers.**
2. **Vow to be optimistic when discussing work situations with your co-workers.** You've probably worked with a negative co-worker in the past and seen the impact of such attitudes. Rather than allow yourself to be pulled down into negativity, keep your positivity high. If you're consistently optimistic, your colleagues will follow suit.
3. **Be proactive in addressing any difficult issues with your co-workers.**
4. **Negotiate work differences cheerfully and honestly.** Speak from your genuine feelings and use tact in your communication. Those you work with will see your honesty, recognize your integrity, and strive to interact with you the same way.
5. **Listen intently when someone is talking to you.** A good listener is integral to effective relationships. Recognizing your co-workers' feelings is an important step to strengthening your relationships.
6. **Step up to meet work challenges.** It never hurts to have a "we're all in this together" attitude at work.
7. **Avoid joining in with co-workers who show negativity.** Spend your precious time elsewhere!
8. **Learn to let go of past hurts and struggles with your associates.** Letting go will bring you relief. Plus, your relationships with those individuals will be on the road to recovery when you decide to let go.
9. **Be supportive of others.** Being supportive shows you care about your co-workers and enhances your relationships.

Having work relationships that actually work is within your reach. Apply the above strategies to establish and maintain positive relationships with your fellow workers. For help with relationship issues or any personal concerns contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). EAP counselors in Erie are located on the 2nd floor of the Medical Center and can be reached at 875-4327. For those outside Erie contact the Health Coach from GE @ 1-866-272-6007 (option 1).

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# Local / National Officers Meet with Company Officials

*By B.A. Wayne Burnett*

On February 5, the local officers along with the national officers met with company officials in Pittsburgh to discuss what is happening at Transportation (Erie). The company opened with job preservation review for our national officers, which the executive board has been attending on a regular basis for many months now.

The first order of business concerned grievances that were generated as a result of the company's decision to eliminate third shift in OHV and transfer some wheel work to Texas. Although the company maintains that no one hit the street or lost wages, this move was well within their rights. We (the union) have a different view point on this matter.

While we recognize that no one (at this time) has hit the street, there was a definite impact to the employees who no longer work in that area. While most ended up on open jobs and maintained their class and code, others were to be placed on jobs that didn't, but would continue to receive their rate of pay.

This is indeed in the contract but the members feel that they should have had the opportunity to maintain their class and code according to their seniority by following the local lay-off and recall procedure. Even with those employees who maintained their status, the union feels that they fall under Article XXIII and should be treated as such.

The company went on to say that volume in Erie is down 10 to 12%, but expect an increase in kitting (possible 25%) this year and that they are focusing on international work which is more labor intense and how it's important that this workforce get good at doing them.

We have no doubt that we can do this work, but we are concerned with other aspects of the business such as farm-outs, people being moved all over the place out of class and category. These issues are becoming more and more relevant because this workforce has finally awoken to the fact that Texas is going to play a major part of what is currently being done in Erie.

Company officials also stated that orders for the

back half of this year have not been confirmed and this could have more of an impact on this workforce. We lost 73 people who accepted the VRIP package last year and our job as union officials is to do everything we can do to keep everyone gainfully employed.

We know that volume has always been the determining factor to employment whether it's here or at any other company, but with the birth of a new facility (Texas) that will eventually change. With the uncertainty of the unconfirmed orders the company is pursuing, coupled with farm-outs, TLOW'S and most of all Texas, have gotten our attention.

The company is saying that more farmed-out will be brought back, but it seems that when work is brought back in one area, work in other parts of the plant are being shipped out. Although we have dealt with many issues over the years, there is always something new that crops up. Everyone, must be very mindful of what is happening here and it is going to take the effort of everyone to pull together to get through these changing times.

As has been clearly stated by this union, we did not build the Texas plant, we had no input in that decision, and we did not call it an overflow plant. This I will say, Texas is going to have an impact on this plant whether it's the wheel business, the locomotive business or any other product that GE decides to build there. We must use every avenue possible, whether contractually, or any local agreements that are currently in place to maintain what we have.

**Oh, by the way, you should pat yourselves on the back for making transportation the number one business in the GE Corporation.**

## Change of Address Form

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Name

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Address

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City/State/Zip

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Local

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

## Recent Local 506 Retiree



We would like to wish all those who recently retired the best for them and their families. Here is a partial list and others will be printed in future news. May your new direction bring you joy, happiness, and most of all, peace. God Bless!

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Roy G. Bolinger          | Charles R. Henderson  |
| Richard S. Filson        | Stephen R. Heubel     |
| Dennis L. Fisher         | Jeffery M. Howard     |
| James H. Prather         | Tony McLendon         |
| Cathy J. Markham         | George Neiswonger     |
| Rodney J. Mikielski      | Shirley A. Crockett   |
| Arnold Mead Lingenfelter | Thomas M. Bertone     |
| Theodore R. Bowser       | Jeanne E. Brown       |
| Cynthia A. Casey         | John P. Ferl          |
| David L. Gaskin          | Frank S. Heim         |
| Robert M. Johnson        | Donna J. Kern         |
| Clemence J. Krakowski    | Stephen G. Kuligowski |
| David J. Mullen          | Paul F. Niebauer      |
| Ding V. Phung            | James J. Rose         |
| James M. Stempka         | William K. Swanson    |
| Walter M. Tebalt         | Bernisa Thomas        |
| Douglas G. Vest          | Francis A. Werling    |
| Harry L. Bland           | Diane M. Bly          |
| David L. Cottrell        | William A. Gahan      |

MARCH 2013						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6 LAC MEETING	7	8	9 EASTERN & SUB REGION MEETING 9:00a.m. UNION HALL
10	11	12 E-BOARD MEETING	13 R.A.G.E. MEMBER-SHIP MEETING 618 MEM. MEETING	14 506 MEMBER-SHIP MEETINGS	15	16
17 St. Patrick's Day 	18	19	20	21 GENERAL ELECTION	22 R.A.G.E. BOARD MEETING	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 Easter 						

## Sports Shorts

As of this writing, the Sports Committee is still accepting applications for the 11th Annual VAVS Bowling Tournament at Eastway Lanes on Sunday, February 24th starting at 12:00 noon.



To benefit the  
**Women Veterans Fund**  
at the Erie VAMC

## Tickets on Sale Now WAPITI FALLS PRINT RAFFLE

By Jack Paluh  
578/1500

Sponsored by **UE Local 506 Sports Committee**

Proceeds will benefit the **Women Veterans Fund**  
at the Erie VA Medical Center

**Drawing:**  
**SUNDAY,**  
**FEBRUARY 24, 2013**

Donation:  
\$2.00 each / 3 for \$5.00



## Active UE 506 Employees Only - As of 1/16/2013

Service (Whole Years)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
# of Employees (UE 506)	37	920	3	41	301	189	11	478	266	135	12	90	36	25	47	52	15	12	36	11	18	25	71	71
Service (Whole Years)	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41						
# of Employees (UE 506)	70	16	13	9	12	11	15	24	45	44	69	51	37	39	141	71	20	8						