

MEETING NOTICE

The next meeting of the Local Union will be held on Wednesday, January 2, 2008 at 6:30 p.m.. We will have a second and final reading of a recommendation by the Bylaws Committee. The committee's recommendation is that paragraph (d) Article IV, Section 1 be removed in its entirety from our Local Union Bylaws.

From Joe Savia, Sr., Business Manager/Financial Secretary Treasurer

On behalf of all of the Officers, Staff and myself, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you and your families best wishes for the Holidays and a Happy, Healthy Prosperous New Year.

Out Of Work

For those who are unemployed and on the out of work list beginning the 17th of December, 2007, please stop by the Hall for your Gift Certificate.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Megan Lee, daughter of Joshua Lee and Kevin Parrish, son of Dale Parrish, they were the recipients of the M. Eddie Moore Scholarship for this year and which each receive a check for \$5,000.00.

Dues Check Off

As per our contract negotiations, anyone who has elected Dues Check Off should begin to see the deductions in January, 2008. The January deductions will be applied to the February, 2008 Dues.

Contract

The final language of the contract has been approved by both sides and is on its way to the printer. It should be distributed in the near future.

COPE

Please let me take this opportunity to thank all of you who have contributed to COPE. Remember, there is strength in numbers and with your contributions we can help the labor friendly politicians.

Address Changes

Please note the UNION HALL has NOT Moved, the Fund Office MOVED, the new address is 9411 Philadelphia Road, Ste S, Baltimore, MD 21237.

Change of Address

The amount of mail that is returned to this office is unbelievable, and with each item being mailed at \$.41, a waste of money. Please make sure to contact this office when you move and advise of the new address.

Substance Abuse Issues

The Substance Abuse program has started and is meeting at the Union Hall on Thursdays at 4:30 p.m.. This program is offered to ALL members and dependents. Remember, it is never to late to attend. There is NO cost and anonymous participation.

Windbreakers

Orders are still being accepted for the pull over v-neck windbreakers. The cost is \$35.00. If you wish to order, please mail your name, address, telephone number and size. These can only be ordered in groups of 30. You will be notified when your order is received.

Feedback

This is your newsletter, anything you wish to see put in here, let me know.

Reminder

Remember to change your beneficiaries as soon as you need to, any change of events in your life should warrant a change in your beneficiary.

THIS 'N THAT

Our congratulations go out to Sean & Kiva Straser on the birth of their first grandson, Hughston James on 11/28/07, Hughston weighed in at 7lbs. 2 ½ oz, and was 20 ½ inches long. This is also Bill Straser's first great grandchild.

Also, congratulations to Phil and Connie Myer on the birth of their first granddaughter, Riley Rae, also great grandchild to Walt and Sally Myer.

BIG WINNER

Bob (Reddog) Mumford was the winner of the 50/50 raffle held at the December Union Meeting.

LATEST RETIREES

Roger S. Bonner	August 1, 2007
John Flesher	October 1, 2007
Dean W. Mehrtens	November 1, 2007

SICK BAY

Kenny Brady is home recuperating after breaking a bone in his foot.

Epam Chisholm is in the hospital and has already used four units of blood.

SYMPATHY

Our sympathy to the family of Fred Elliott, who lost his wife Lorraine. She was also the mother of Ricky Williams.

Our heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends of the following members:

Retiree, Thomas J. Geoghegan died November 28, 2007. Brother Geoghegan was 58 years old and had been a member since March 23, 2000. Death # 1276.

Retiree, Gerald R. Mehrtens died November 28, 2007. Brother Mehrtens was 66 years old and had been a member since June 1, 1982. Death # 1277.

Retiree, Jerre N. Ness died December 7, 2007. Brother Ness was 85 years old and had been a member since May 21, 1946. Death #1278.

THE CURRENT DEATH IS NO. 1278. ANY MEMBER NOT PAID THROUGH DEATH NO. 1278 IS IN ARREARS.

From Kevin Sullivan, Business Agent

It's that time of year where, while shopping at the malls, we are inundated with the message of "Peace and Goodwill to All". I guess the rest of the year we can do whatever, but for now we are reminded to live like we have some sort of spiritual principles. It seems like a perfect time to think about our interactions with our fellow brothers and sisters on the job.

The reviewing of separation notices both recent and in the past year has gotten me thinking about this. If you are not familiar with the separation notice I will try to explain. Upon leaving employment from your company, the company will give you and the Union Hall a notice giving reason for dismissal. The purpose of the separation notice was to get an honest assessment of that worker, which usually indicates a pattern; either good or bad.

When we receive a separation notice showing reduction in force (layoff) every 4,8,12 months, what might that tell us? It's a good chance that mechanic is a steady Eddy that shows up, does his job, and which it's finished comes back to the Hall for another. When we get members that have several resignations, what might that indicate? It may be someone chasing overtime. Then we will have those that will be let go for cause after a couple of weeks to 2 months; the cause usually being absenteeism and tardiness. And granted, we do have our small share and these are the ones that the Standards For Excellence will help.

What bothers me is the notice that comes in, with comments penciled in, after a member worked for a company for 6, 9, 15 months. The notices might say poor quality workmanship, poor attitude or both. And like I said earlier, the separation notice will show patterns. Upon receiving such a nasty lay off, for the first time, the mechanic might ask the Union to look into the firing for he fears the possible repercussions of having that on his record. When the Union looks into the separation they sometimes will find out that what was filled out might not be an honest assessment of that worker. The worker never missed time, has a resume showing he's qualified and former employers were happy. So what happened here? Why after 9 to 12 months do they finally say he has a poor attitude and exhibits poor workmanship? These are traits that usually show their ugly face much sooner.

When this happens, I guarantee you, 9 out of 10 times you just pissed off your boss and he's going to get you one way or another. They might have to dig deep and go back 10 months and say you should have gotten that job done in six days rather than seven. They might say it's because you broke a drill last month; they are going to try to justify the firing.

Peace and Goodwill – I knew a boss that when he got really, really mad at you he would send you home. He told me he would rather do that than make a decision while his emotions and thinking were running on anger. It took him one mistake to develop that philosophy because he learned a few things from that firing.

- 1) He just lost a good employee.
- 2) The guy's wife just had a child along with the two at home, now his anger affected the whole family.
- 3) Some of that anger really had a lot to do with what was going on in his own life

Brothers and Sisters, before you write someone up, or fire them take a step back and try to remove yourself emotionally. And legitimately, if it's time for him to go then it's time for him to go; don't react on your anger though. One more thing, I know I am asking a lot, but if you fire them don't hold a grudge. People do change.

Happy Holidays!

Bill Durkin, Organizer/Business Rep

On Friday, December 7, 2007, I went to a job site at the Smithsonian American History Museum. I had been called days earlier about a problem with asbestos contamination on the site.

I met with the Steamfitter, Plumbing, Sheet Metal and Iron Worker Foremen. They told me about the problems they were having on the job with asbestos.

When the Mechanical Contractor began work on the job they were required to do work in a cinder block air duct and pipe chase. They questioned whether the insulation was asbestos. The General Contractor said they had done a visual inspection and told them if they wanted it lab tested they would have to test it themselves. Fortunately, the contractor had the ability to have it tested and it was found to be asbestos. The General Contractor only then conducted their own test with the same results. But during the interim, the walls to this chase had been torn down and the insulation was disrupted.

While working in a Mechanical Equipment room, an air duct had to be enlarged. The men doing the work asked the General Contractor to test that insulation because they believed it to also be asbestos. The superintendent informed them it was not asbestos. The workmen then proceeded to remove the insulation, at that time some of the walls to the machine room had been removed and any airborne material was potentially carried to other parts of the museum. The workmen continued to work in the area, tracking the dust to other areas of the building and carrying it home, on their clothes to contaminate their own families. Several days later, the Smithsonian Representative stopped the removal because they believed it to be asbestos and this was later proven to be true. The area was sealed off and a clean up was conducted. Asbestos was found in the air circulating fan. This leaves the question, who else in the museum other than construction workers may have been exposed. When the workers returned to the area they found that the machine room was cleaned but there was dust inside their tool boxes. The abatement contractor had done the minimum allowable containment. Later, after this containment had failed, the asbestos was properly encapsulated.

Another incident occurred when the job required demolition of an existing bathroom. The plumbing fixtures were removed but the piping in the walls was left in place. The walls were then torn down and the pipe insulation, that was asbestos, was torn up and released into the air. This cavalier attitude is inexcusable.

I attempted to contact the Smithsonian's Contracting Officer but he was off that day and on Monday the 10th he was again off. I was informed by other people in the Smithsonian Office that the matter would need to be taken up with the General Contractor.

At the General Contractor's office I was told that they were in compliance with the guidelines of the contract. The Smithsonian limited the amount of abatement in the contract.

I walked the jobsite and saw no signs posted indicating the possibility of asbestos in any areas. What I did see, during my short time on the site was two areas that appeared to be disrupted asbestos.

I personally have 33 years working the field and have had to deal with the asbestos issue on the older buildings around the city built before the mid 60's the requirements allow containment by sealing the asbestos. This may work until the seal is broken or removed. It isn't possible to tell without lab testing whether insulation contains asbestos. The norm is to claim that it isn't asbestos or "just wet it down". The owner doesn't want to incur the expense to have it removed. The contractor doesn't want to jeopardize their relationship with the owner the employee doesn't want to lose his/her job, so the problem continues on. They get their work done and get away as soon as possible and let the next guy deal with it.

If the current laws can protect workers then there must be enforcement. We believe that the older buildings in the area will continue to need repairs and anything less than total removal in exposed areas is unacceptable. We would like to have the opportunity to meet with you or your staff about the problems our members deal with every day.

As their Union Representatives, we see day to day the effects on our members of asbestosis. We are the canaries in the coal mines.

The above is intended to be written in letter form and sent to our representatives on Capitol Hill. We need your help in contacting your representatives in the Senate and the House and let them know that the current situation is unacceptable and a thorough inquiry is needed.

WHAT'S NEW IN TRAINING

Journeyman Training Classes are now forming and will start on Saturday, January 5, 2008. Classes are open to all 602 members. The following classes are being offered.

- 1) Variable Speed Drives: Instructor – Fred Lohr. 20 hours. This class will start on Saturday, January 5, 2008 at 7:00 a.m. and will run for four (4) Saturdays.
- 2) Introduction to EMS: Instructor – King Thomas. 50 hours. This class will start on Saturday, February 2, 2008, 7:00 a.m.
- 3) Boilers: Instructor – John Vassallo. 50 hours. This class will start on Thursday, January 10, 2008 at 4:30 p.m.

Please call the school (301) 341-1555 for more information and to register for any of the Seminars. All other classes are on a walk-in basis, provided there is space available, to all Members of Local 602.

SOLIDARITY

President, John P. Sullivan

Another New Year's Resolutions

Last year I asked the members to consider two resolutions for the New Year. Faithfully attend your local union meetings and participate in our sponsored union activities. This year I wish that you would consider a third resolution, get active politically. Register to vote and, if eligible to do so, cast your ballot in the Presidential Primary on February 12th. Take the time to vote in your party's Congressional Primary. Make a commitment to vote in the General Election on November 4th, 2008.

We will have a Presidential Primary in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia on February 12th. You must be registered to vote by January 14th in the District and Virginia and by January 22nd in Maryland in order to vote in the Presidential Primary. Maryland and the District of Columbia have party rules that govern who may vote in their primaries. Virginia has primaries open to all registered voters.

Maryland will hold both its Presidential and Congressional Primaries on February 12th. There are eight Congressional Districts in Maryland. There is opposition in both parties in all but the 2nd Congressional District. Registered Democrats can vote in the Democratic Primary. Registered Republicans can vote in the Republican Primary. If you are registered as a Libertarian, Independent, Green, D.C. Statehood Party, etc., you can not vote in either the Democratic or Republican Primaries. The deadline for voter registration for the November 4th General Election is October 14th.

The District of Columbia will hold its Congressional and local primary on September 8th. You must be registered to vote by August 11th to vote in this primary. Similar to Maryland, the District will conduct Democratic and Republican Party Primaries. You can only vote in the primary in whose party you are registered. The deadline for voter registration for the November 4th General Election is October 6th.

Virginia will hold its Congressional Primary on June 10th. The deadline for voter registration for the Congressional Primary is May 12th. There will likely be challenges for both the Democratic and Republican nominations for the open U.S. Senate seat and in many of the eleven Congressional Districts. Virginia is an open primary state. Citizens do not register by party. If you are a registered voter in Virginia you may vote in either the Democratic or Republican Party Primaries but not both. Remember that you can not be required to sign or be held to a "loyalty pledge". Your vote in the November General Election is independent of any obligation relating to your primary ballot. The deadline for voter registration for the November 4th General Election is October 6th.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

FROM WAYNE'S WORLD

This year it will be hard for many Americans to get into the Holiday Spirit with the United States at War. Let our thoughts and prayers go out to these Americans.

In this New Year let's talk about the future. Having integrity in the workplace is what you do when no one else is looking. Getting to work on time, not leaving early, cutting corners and achieve the goals your job asks of you. These are some of the qualities on the job that indicate you care more about the work you are responsible for and less about what others think you should do. If you are a foreman on the job, you are a key person. No other single individual has a greater impact on the everyday operation of the job. A foreman can take a bad job and turn it around, they can take a weak crew and get great work out of them. A crew will only work as hard as the foreman does. If you lead by example and demonstrate how to do things the right way you will get the respect from the members. The future of our trade depends on every Journeyman and Apprentice in our Union. Look at your job as a place to grow your knowledge in the trade. Some members might look down on themselves or others because they were not so great in Apprentice School. Education is important and the classroom is not the only place to learn.

Every member takes an Oath of Obligation that they will assist any member, defend them, not slander them and treat them with the warmest friendship and brotherly love. This means you should help your brothers and/or sisters to learn on the job. This also means that you should not talk bad about a member just because you don't like them. This sometimes stops a member from getting a job. Our skills, our attitudes and work ethics are going to let us survive in the future.

There are two big hospital jobs coming up this year, which Southland has one. This means Medical Gas Fitters. Are your certifications up to date? This is what I mean about our skills. If we don't have manpower, guess who does! We either win or lose the game, there is no tie. Let's win!

May each of you have a safe and blessed holiday and New Year.