

# REPORTER



## Emotional Rollercoaster at Strattec

### Strattec increases business opportunities in Milwaukee

by Dennis Nowak

Strattec has purchased a 400 ton press, with a cost of \$800,000 for the purpose of increasing stamping capacity at the Milwaukee facility. This event was a concentrated effort by a lot of people from both Labor and management. Our continuing efforts resulted in the Company having confidence in the Milwaukee workforce to manufacture these new products.

Greg Minue, Director of Milwaukee operations, stated that the press would be up and ready around the January 2007 time frame. Production requirements for parts will be needed by approximately March of 2007 with 1 to 1 and 1/2 shifts slated for run hours. Some of these new programs require a different type of plating process, which could result in additional capital investment for a new line in Milwaukee.

We have a great combined workforce. I'm confident we'll be successful. Thanks to everyone for their contributions in seeing this event come to reality. Great job to everyone!

### Service Department to be eliminated

by Karl Schneider

On Tuesday October 10, 2006 your Bargaining Committee had a meeting with the Company's Bargaining Committee. The title of this meeting was called "Business Outlook". I had predicted that we were going to be faced with more layoffs because orders are weak, however, Strattec is on the verge of new and exciting work. We know the Company is making capital investments to the building in Milwaukee, to accommodate the new 400 ton press. We also knew that the Epsilon Business was awarded to the Vast Alliance and the work is about to be placed by Alps (the Tier I Supplier). What all this means is if the work is placed in Milwaukee, Strattec would need to make more capital investments here. Instead the Company told us "Due to lost sales, Strattec was moving the Service Department to Mexico effective January 1, 2007. WE WERE STUNNED!

The Company repeatedly told us it was NOT BECAUSE OF THE PEOPLE or the QUALITY OF THEIR WORK. Having worked in the department for the past month, I can tell you first hand that the company is accurate. It is not because of the people or the quality of their work.

The first part of this article may still happen unfortunately the last part will happen.

The Company did regret the impact this move will have on us (the employees) and they asked the Committee to get creative to minimize the impact. The Committee will be meeting next week to try and come up with ways to do just that.

Once again I want to thank the people that helped turn things around in Service. Your hard work and dedication to making Strattec a World Class supplier in this field is a testament to your perseverance.

It will not be easy to continue to satisfy the customer's needs for the next few months but that is exactly what we need to do. I believe everyone involved in the affected areas will do just that. I am proud of you, my brothers and sisters!

## December Membership Meeting

Sunday

December 3, 2006

9:30 a.m.

Frank Monreal's El Matador  
9155 W. Bluemound Rd.

### IMPORTANT BUSINESS

- Reports of Officers, Grievance Representatives and Committees
- Discussion and action on any other proper business for this meeting.

# Labor Day 2006

Photographs by Don Murphy and Ralph Schwieger



# Membership Meeting Recap

by Karen Clark

The membership meeting was held on Sunday October 1, 2006 at Frank Monreal's El Matador.

Under application for membership, 9 new members were voted in.

Vicky Black gave the Trustee report for the months of August and September, while Ralph Schwieger gave the combined Financial-Secretary/Treasurer report for the months of August and September in the absence of Ross Winklbauer. At Briggs in July, there were 722 dues paying members at Briggs and 261 members at Strattec for a total of 1033 members. For the month of August, Briggs had 588 dues paying members and Strattec had 271 for a total of 859 members.

## Communications

2 Classes will be offered at MATC- West Allis campus 1200 So. 71st St.:

- A 5 week class on Employment Law -Thursdays October 12, 2006 through November 9, 2006. 5:30p.m. to 8:30p.m. Cost is \$46.51
- A 2 day class on Collective Bargaining Saturdays November 8, 2006 and Saturday December 2, 2006. The cost is \$37.06.

The Local will reimburse any member that successfully completes either or both of the courses.

On Sunday October 29, 2006 at Serb Hall 5101 W. Oklahoma Ave., MCLC is presenting "The True Story of Fannie Lou Hamer". She is known as the Mother of Voting Rights. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. The Local will reimburse any member that wishes to attend this performance. Executive Board recommended motions that passed:

- Send up to 4 women to the USW Women of Steel Quarterly Area Council Meeting to be held on October 19, 2006 at USW Local 2006 Union Hall in Oak Creek. There is a \$15 delegate.
- Renew our membership with WISCOSH at a cost of \$200.
- Send a \$100 donation to Charlie Kernaghan, the Executive Director of the National Labor Committee. He is a strong advocate of the anti-sweatshop movement.

## Reports of Officers

President Scott Godshaw reported on the elimination of the Micro Line and Dept. 138-Special Machining. He also reported that the Service Division at the Falls will be adding 16 hourly jobs.

The Bargaining Committee will be meeting with the benefits department on October 9th and also

meeting with Joe Wright, who replaced Paul Neylon on October 13th.

At Strattec, Scott reported on the upcoming 3rd stage meeting and on the CSI program. He also commented on Strattec continuing to look for more work for Milwaukee. He also reported on the upcoming Steward Training that will be held on November 8th, thanked all those that participated in Laborfest and reminded all to get out and vote on November 7th, preferably for labor endorsed candidates

Jesse Edwards reported on production on the south end of Burleigh and coils. There was a cutback in our maintenance department. Jesse informed us that the southern plants were laying off people. He also stated that several bathrooms were closing down. And lastly he stated that the insurance packets would be coming in the mail soon.

Jackie Goodwin reported on the elimination of the Micro Line and where the members ended up. Jackie also reported on paint damage to cars over by the Testhouse. She finished by speaking on the Leadership Academy and Union history.

Karl Schneider reported on the Health Risk Assessment at Strattec. Karl also reported on the new equipment that was purchased and things moving in the right direction. He stated that more vacation spots had opened up in Service and ended with reporting that the United Way campaign will be starting soon.

A motion was passed for the next membership meeting to be held on Sunday December 3, 2006 at Frank Monreal's El Matador 9155 W. Bluemound Rd. in Milwaukee at 9:30 a.m.

## Membership Information

**October 2006**

**904 Members in Good Standing**

**626 in Briggs & Stratton Unit**

**278 in Strattec Unit**

**October Dues Payments**

**561 Dues Paying Members at Briggs**

**269 Dues Paying members at Strattec**

**830 Total Dues Paying Members**

**(Difference reflects members off work for lay-off, illness or other reasons)**

# Strattec Corner

by Al Olivares

Hello Sisters and Brothers, I have positive news and not so positive news to write about. Obviously, we are all seeing the effects of the struggling automotive industry for which we provide components. Unfortunately, we are going to start feeling the more serious ramifications of this slump in automotive sales. At the time that I am writing this editorial, a voluntary layoff has been posted in the Stamping and Milling area and its tool room. It is managements' opinion that this is a necessary layoff until things pick up again. I am hopeful that this pick up in work will be very soon.

Now, how about something a bit more on a positive note? Strattec de Milwaukee has purchased a 400 ton punch press for use at the Milwaukee facility. This is truly great news! For those of you who are not familiar with Punch Press and the machinery they utilize, me included, let me attempt to describe it to you in layman's terms. It is one big ol' son of a gun! Installation of this beast of a machine is no simple task either. It will be a major undertaking that will require a good chunk of change and some hefty modifications to the plant itself.

A few of you may be asking, "Al what's the big deal? It's one flippin machine! The company has taken many other ones out!"

My reply to that is, of course, this one flippin big ol' machine is coming in to be run by our people in our building! That included, with the size of this press, leads me to believe that Strattec is investing in our collective future. Although we are losing our Service department, I hope this is a sign of positive things to come as far as growing the business here in Milwaukee and for our people. The long and short of it is let us show management that they can be 100% confident that we can learn and master any equipment they would like to bring in and produce quality, defect free parts. That is of course what this workforce here in Milwaukee does, very well, I may add. Our competitors cannot say the same about their products, even though they try too! So let's stop all the boo-hooing and cry baby whining and grab the opportunity to take the ball and run with it. If I am wrong then it does not make a difference, but if I am right, and I think I am, let this be the rebirth of Strattec's Milwaukee Operations and the growth of robust Unionism within these four walls.

In Solidarity,  
Big Al Olivares

## Grievance Rep Reports

### Strattec Security

by Karl Schneider

NAFTA has failed us and the people of Mexico. Unions in this country knew it from the very beginning. There is a reason why our borders to the north do not have the same problems as to the south. Canada has REAL or fair wages through collective bargaining. They also have National Health Care.

Even though Mexico has Unions and a form of Health Care, the working people have not received REAL or FAIR wages. I believe that is why they are risking everything, sometimes their lives for a better life in the United States.

If Corporate America continues to chase cheap labor from port to port, exploiting people that have no voice, we will all be doomed.

And we, as consumers, have to stop tripping over each other to save pennies at the Wal-Marts and the Sam's Clubs at the cost of our Brothers, Sisters and neighbor's jobs. To me, it is not worth our livelihoods.

So if a politician is in favor of CAFTA (NAFTA on steroids or NAFTA x 10) tell them no more by not voting for them. It does not matter what political party they are in, if they are in favor of CAFTA they are against working people like you and I. WE NEED OUR POLITICIANS TO START WORKING FOR US BY WORKING TOWARDS FAIR TRADE - NOT FREE TRADE!!!!!!!

UNITED STEELWORKERS  
**USW**  
UNITY AND STRENGTH FOR WORKERS

**Vote**



November 7, 2006

## Notice:

There will be a Steward Training Session on Wednesday Nov. 8, 2006 at 8500 W. Capitol Dr. The times are noon for 2nd shift 3:30 for 1st shift and 3rd shift can attend either session.

President's Report by Scott Godshaw

## Mixed Emotions at Strattec End of an Era at Briggs

At Strattec, there certainly has been mixed emotions. Strattec had announced they are investing some capital in Milwaukee. They have purchased a 400 ton press.

This is refreshing that Strattec is attempting to invest in Milwaukee. They continue to look for new work that could relate to more employees or at least preserve the current workforce we have today. This Local will help and assist Strattec and do anything within our power to help sustain or enhance the family supporting jobs we currently have in Milwaukee.

However, the company announced to the Bargaining Committee on October 10th that the Service Department will be eliminated by the end of the year. This will result in a loss of approximately 40 hourly jobs. The Company had assured us, it was strictly a cost savings measure due to the decline of the domestic automobile industry.

At Briggs, it was an end of an era as the last assembly line was eliminated. We were informed that the Micro Line, which originally was going to be shut down for a couple months for re-tooling, was not going back up again. Here is to all the members that had a hand in assembling the millions of engines in Milwaukee over the years. Your work ethic, quality driven attention to detail and expertise is unmatched by anyone that attempts to build "our" engines. This is just another sad and disappointing development in the continued saga of B&S in Milwaukee.

In other news, we were informed at the same meeting regarding the Micro Line that Special Machining Department 138 would also be eliminated. This announcement came as a large surprise as the members of that area were recently told that everything looked good in their department. The toolmakers, that fall under job number 3070, have the right contractually, seniority permitting, to bump into the tool room department 735. Department 138 will be eliminated by the end of October.

On a positive note, it was revealed that our Service Division will be supplying all the Simplicity Service parts here in Milwaukee. This will create 16 new hourly jobs. This will happen in December.

We recently had an arbitration award hearing. This was the discharge arbitration where we received a favorable ruling. However, the company wanted to mitigate some of the back pay due to the grievant going to school. We then had to go back to the original arbitrator and set up another hearing. We ended up reaching a settlement with the company that day and the member now will be receiving his back pay.

## USW Leadership Academy Conference

by Karen Clark

I would like to make a few comments on the Leadership Academy I attended in Merrillville, Indiana from September 17th through the 22nd.

This was my first training I had gone through. And what a great experience it was. I met so many Union brothers and sisters from Michigan and Wisconsin who are looking for the same things we are. Those things include: paying us a decent wage and keeping our jobs here in this great country. And not sending them overseas or in our case, down south. We have lost so many jobs in the past 10 years that it just makes you sick.

"Why is it the harder we work for our companies, the more they want to take away from us?"

It was very interesting to be in a class with about 100 people that were representing 73 different locals. Some of these locals were as small as 20 members and others were as large as 7000 members.

Some of the workshops I attended were:

- Understanding the USW Constitution & By-laws
- Confronting Employer- "Blame the victim safety programs"
- Local Union Finance/Fiduciary Responsibility
- Communications in your local
- Organizing Training

Each class was 90 minutes and let me tell you, they were very informative.

For 2 days, I was in the class entitled "Building Power for Collective Bargaining". It was awesome! There were a lot of hands-on projects. We worked in groups of 6. And just to have so many different ideas to work off of were great. There were 2 women instructors who were a great deal of fun but they really knew their job. I feel I left this class with so many new ideas and gained much of their knowledge in this field.

Also on this trip were Ross Winklbauer, Jackie Goodwin, Dan Badzinski and Al Olivares. We all got a lot out of this conference, the first put on by the new USW.

At this conference, the USW also provided us great guest speakers. They really got us all pumped up and truly motivated.

And last but not least, Mr. Jon Geenen, who is the USW District 2 Director, is a super guy. Jon is truly looking out for the best interest for all of our USW Brothers and Sisters. He continues to move in a positive direction. He is certainly an inspiration to every Union member.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

October 31- Halloween



November 7- Election Day



November 11- Veteran's Day



November 23- Thanksgiving



December 3- Membership Meeting



December 23 through January 1-  
Christmas Holiday

## *Grievance Rep Reports*

### **Briggs & Stratton Second Shift**

by Jesse Edwards

#### **Maintenance**

The maintenance department had a cut back in man power on September 1, 2006. They cut back 8 members. This affected 3 millwrights, 2 pipe fitters, 2 electricians and 1 machine repairman. The reason given was a cut back in production. Some members were transferred and others were laid off. The outside contractors were also let go.

#### **Department 797-Coils**

In late August, the coil department had a requisition in for 6 production workers. Then on September 7, 2006, they had a voluntary lay off. They did get volunteers to take it. The volunteers are scheduled to come back within 6 weeks after the Christmas holiday period. The coil department also started a 3rd.shift with 1 setup and 2 production workers.

#### **Restrooms**

The company decided to close some of the restrooms. The reason given was cost. At the time of this writing all restrooms remain open. However, one of our janitors was eliminated effective October 10, 2006. There are four janitors left; two males and two females. They will all be working on first shift.

#### **Menomonee Falls**

At this time, the Menomonee Falls plant needs sixteen additional people. They need material handlers and DC3's. These jobs will be filled as soon as possible. If you are interested in a open job, you should watch the main bulletin boards for the informational posting or see Laura Flees in personnel.

#### **Laborfest**

Thanks to all of you who attended Laborfest.

#### **Vote**

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU GO OUT AND VOTE ON NOVEMBER 7, 2006.

In Solidarity,  
Jesse Edwards

# Grievance Rep Reports

## Briggs & Stratton First & Third Shift

by Jackie Goodwin

### Leadership Training Academy

On September 17, 2006, Dan Badzinski, Karen Clark, Al Olivares, Ross Winklbauer and myself attended the first leadership conference since PACE and USW had merged together. Meeting different locals from different states, I discovered that we are all facing similar problems, including; pay cuts, high insurance costs, attendance system and jobs relocating to China.

After speaking with some of my brothers and sisters, I thought to myself, "Does all of Big Business get together for lunch and attempt to have the same contract?"

There were many different classes which included in part:

- Rapid Response- Educating, engaging and mobilizing USW members.
- Election 2006 Training- "Why we have to win-What we have to do!"
- Pension and Insurance
- Contract Administration and DFR
- Financial Officer Training

It was really not about all the classes I took but more about all of us coming together with the same goals to try and make a difference, not just in our locals but in our communities as well. It made me remember some of the history of Unions long before many of us were even born. People had died for some of the rights we take for granted today. In retrospect, we have gone back into time, with the way companies continue to attack our rights and benefits. We still have to stand tall and continue to fight for our livelihood, so our children will have something to look forward to.

The Union is as strong as the people, so hold your head up high and be proud of all the work you have accomplished all of these years. We have done great things and we will continue doing great things for this company. There is not another workforce like the one we have here.

### History

On May 1, 1886, some 200,000 workers struck in support of the effort to achieve the 8-hour work day. While the national 8-hour workday strike movement was generally peaceful and frequently successful, it led to an episode of violence in Chicago that resulted in a setback for the new labor movement. The McCormick Harvester Company in Chicago, learning in advance of the planned strike,

locked out all its' employees who held cards. Fights erupted and the police opened fire on the Union members, killing four of them. A public rally at Haymarket Square, to protest the killings, drew a large and peaceful throng. As the meeting drew to a close, a bomb exploded near the lines of police guards. Seven of the uniformed force were killed with some 50 others wounded. The police began to fire into the crowd. Several more people were killed and about 200 others were wounded.

Eight anarchists were arrested and charged with a capital crime. Four were executed. Governor John P. Altgeld of Illinois eventually freed four others after he concluded the trial had been unfairly conducted. No one knew who planted the bomb.

But as Samuel Gompers, the First President of the American Federation of Labor, ruefully commented years later, "The bomb not only killed the policemen but it killed our eight-hour movement for a few years after."

This is just one story that our Brothers and Sisters of the early Unions had to deal with. We have come a long way since and let's never forget.

### Micro Line

On August 25, 2006, the Micro Line was informed that they would not be going back up. This is another loss for us again. Of the nine members, 6 bumped into coils, one person was added to mufflers while 2 were added to the Service division at the Falls. I would personally like to thank each and every member who worked on the line to the very end. Here's to a job well done my Brothers and Sisters.

### Test House

Many of our members and some of the company people as well received a paint job that they did not ask for. With the construction going on at Lowes, the roads being down and dust in the air, cars and trucks in the area were damaged by paint mists. Our next door neighbor claimed that they were not doing any painting. I guess our members must have a Fairy Godmother who sprinkled paint instead of dust. Once again our people, as well as the salary folks have to dig into their own pockets for parking where they always have parked.

If you need me, my pager is 669-5005 or call ext.2198. And thank you for your support on my election. GOD BLESS YOU

In Solidarity,  
Jackie Goodwin (JG)

## Briggs Retiree Club

It's time to write another article for the Reporter. With fall here and the leaves falling all over, we know the cold weather and snow are right around the corner. That just means it's time to go back inside and enjoy our club events.

In November, we will have bingo on Wednesday the 8th and our monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday the 15th. Sheepshead is played every Tuesday. All events will be held at the Legion Post #447 located at 3245 N. 124th St. Please bring your treats to our meeting.

Our annual Christmas party will be held on Sunday December 3, 2006. It also will be at the Legion Post #447. Doors open at 10 a.m. and lunch will be served at noon. Door prizes will also be given out.

Members have to be paid up by the end of this year to be eligible for our events in 2007. Dues are \$24 a year.

Our get well wishes go out to Ruth Brylski, Richard Kurtz, Kathy Brad and Ernest Kurezewski.

Also our sympathy goes out to the family of Lucy Miller, who recently passed away.

Have a safe and Happy Holiday Season,  
Take care and God Bless,  
Frances C. Capello  
Corresponding Secretary  
262-251-7514



## ASK YOUR LAWYER

by Thomas Flanagan

*Previant, Goldberg, Uelman, Gratz, Miller & Brueggeman, S.C.*

### YOU'RE INJURED AT WORK. NOW WHAT?

Whether you will be treated fairly when you are injured at work is largely determined on the date of injury. In general, worker's compensation insurers view claims skeptically and will transform any misstep into a reason to deny a claim or prematurely suspend benefits.

To put yourself in the best position to be treated fairly, we recommend you follow these five rules:

1. Report every injury. Do not attempt to determine whether the injury is serious enough to report. The condition may become serious at a future date and failure to report may defeat a right to compensation.

2. Report the injury on the date it occurs, or when you first notice symptoms. Any delay in reporting the injury may create a basis for denying the claim.

3. Seek medical treatment immediately. As with a late report of injury, a delay in seeking medical treatment provides the skeptical worker's compensation insurer a basis to deny the claim. Failure to obtain early medical treatment may make it difficult to prove a causal connection between the injury and later disability. "Maybe it will get better" are dangerous words in connection with a work-related injury.

4. Get medical treatment only from your personal physician or from a physician whom you trust. An injured worker may retain the services of any medical doctor, chiropractor, podiatrist or psychologist licensed in Wisconsin. An employer cannot restrict an employee to a health care provider or clinic chosen by the employer except in certain unusual emergency situations. We recommend against submitting to treatment by the "company doctor" or the "company clinic."

5. Give both the employer and your physician an accurate and detailed description of the injury or condition. As much detail as possible, including date and time, should be reported. Full details of the occurrence should be included. Actual symptoms or complaints should not be minimized. Decisions on compensability or permanent disability may be influenced by initial reporting.

If you have questions about worker's compensation, personal injury or social security disability, please feel free to call the Previant, Goldberg, Uelman, Gratz, Miller & Brueggeman law firm at 414-271-4500 or toll free at 1-800-841-5232.

## LOCAL 2-232 REPORTER

November 2006  
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LOCAL 2-232 UNITED STEEL, PAPER AND FORESTRY, RUBBER,  
MANUFACTURING, ENERGY, ALLIED INDUSTRIAL  
AND SERVICE WORKERS INTERNATIONAL UNION

*Representing employees of Briggs & Stratton Corp. and  
Strattec Security Corp.*

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