

REPORTER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF USW LOCAL 2-232

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OCTOBER 2008

OBAMA is THE Choice

by Scott Godshaw

Barack Obama is THE choice for working people. Obama has voted 98% of the time for working families, while McCain has voted 90% with Bush.

Obama is a co-sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act to protect workers rights to form a union and negotiate a fair contract with their employer.

Obama is committed to signing universal healthcare legislation by the end of his first term, if elected. McCain, if elected, wants to tax your healthcare benefit.

Obama will fight for Fair Trade, not Free trade. He wants to end tax breaks for companies that send jobs overseas.

"Trade agreements, he says, must include labor and environmental standards that are enforced."

Obama knows NAFTA certainly needs to be amended. He stands firm against CAFTA.

Obama stated, "I will make sure that we renegotiate NAFTA. I think we should use the hammer of

a potential opt-out as leverage to ensure that we actually get labor and environmental standards that are enforced. And that has not been happening so far.

Obama proposes Trade Adjustment Assistance to retrain Workers. To help workers adapt to a rapidly changing economy, he would extend Trade Adjustment Assistance to service industry workers, create education accounts to help workers retrain and provide retraining assistance for vulnerable workers before they lose their jobs.

As you know we have been handing out a good deal of flyers at the plant. We want to make sure you have all the facts and be the most informed voter possible.

This IS the most important election in your life time. Yes, you have heard it before but this time it is more true than ever. And Senator Barack Obama is clearly THE choice for you and working families!



Senator Barack Obama

December Membership Meeting

Sunday
December 7, 2008
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.

NOTICE:

There will be a discussion and vote on a potential dues increase for the Strike and Defense Fund at our December 7, 2008 membership meeting. The dues resolution was passed at the USW International Convention held in July 2008.

Obama Rocks!

by Ralph Schwieger

Always cool and calm, Barack Obama is showing America that he is the only choice for President of the United States!

The entire world is in a meltdown as I write this and no one knows how all this will play out. Last quarter my 401k plan lost over \$7000.00, my house has lost at least 13% of its value over the past 12 months and the National Debt clock had to remove the \$ sign, to accommodate our debt going over 10 trillion dollars.

This week, Barack Obama said, "This isn't a time for fear or panic, this is a time for resolve and leadership. I know that we can steer ourselves out of this crisis, because that's who we are. This is a nation that has faced down war and depression, great challenges and great threats."

His opponent has responded by going negative and spreading lies and fear. Vote for me and my unqualified VP or you will perish! They can't find anything new to discourage voters from supporting Obama, so they resurrect old stories, dust them off and hope they stick. That is the Republican way! They did the same thing to McSame himself in 2000! Do you remember his supposed black love child from 2000? McSame denounce going negative earlier this year saying it has no place in this campaign. Talk about a flip flop!

When the first thing your VP choice has to do is hire an attorney to represent her in the Trooper Gate scandal, you are not putting, "Country First".

It is a clear choice who will fight for working families like ours, its Barack Obama!

Would you like a Steelworkers for Obama T-shirt? You can get one if you donate some time at the Milwaukee Area Labor Council, 633 South Hawley Road. Phone banks and Member to Member walks are happening every day of the week, but on Tuesday's from 4 to 8pm, the United Steelworkers sponsor the phone bank. Saturday mornings there are Member to Member walks, most running from 10am till 2pm. If you have any questions, please call the Union office at 414-463-7425. I would love to see you there!

And finally.....

"It's time we had a president who didn't choke saying the word, "Union". A president who knows it's the Department of Labor and not the Department of Management. And a president who strengthens our Unions by letting them do what they do best, organize our workers."

Barack Obama addressing the USW Convention July 2, 2008.

President's Report by Scott Godshaw

Briggs Looking to Hire

At Briggs, they have hired several new members - 6 in the coil department, 2 in the test house and 1 for the power house. I also received postings for additional hirings. In department 720, there is a posting for one L.G. 18 Warehouse Attendant and one L.G. 21 Associate 2. In department 743, there is a posting for one L.G. 15 Lead Waste Treatment Operator. And in department 765, there is a posting for one L.G. 18 Machine Control B. Also at Service there are several openings as well. There is a posting for 5 L.G. 22 Material Handlers and as well as 5 L.G.18 DC Associate 3s. If you know of anyone that would be interested in any of these positions, have them go online and apply.

The bargaining committee met with the company Wednesday October 1st and they informed us that the power house will now be going on the 12 hour shifts per the contract. They will begin that on November 3rd. The company must give a 30 day notice in order to institute the 12 hour shift and they have fulfilled that.

At Service, although we still have many issues out there, it has been 1 year in September that we agreed to the new productivity reward program there and I am glad to report that the members eligible have received a payout all but 2 weeks in the past year. Most of the payouts have been 65 cents, however, there have been several payouts of a \$1.00 an hour as well. It has been very successful and if you remember this mid contract language change that the bargaining committee agreed to, saved those packaging jobs from being outsourced. The members out there are doing a fantastic job.

The insurance packets were mailed out last week for the active members. I did receive mine. The employee contribution went up approximately 3% across the board. For example, this is the single contribution, The EPO this year was \$256.08 a month and will be \$265.23 next year. The PPO is \$174.04 this year and will be \$180.27 next year and the high deductible that was \$50 this year will be \$51.80 next year. If you do not have any changes in your plans, you do not need to do anything. Of course, if you have a flex ben account, you would need to change that every year even if you do not have changes. I would also like to inform you, in the vision plan, there is no reason for you NOT to sign up for the Preferred Vision Plan instead of the Basic, as it does not cost you anything. And dental, if you do not take the Dentacare plan and you are signed up for the Comprehensive plan, again there is no reason NOT to sign up for the preferred plan instead of the basic.

continued on page 3

President's Report continued from page 2

There are approximately 35 people signed up to retire at the end of the year.

STRATTEC

At Strattec, we are still dealing with some language problems regarding the printing of the contract. We did agree to a formatting change with paragraphs now including letters to more easily identify the proper section and also headers of sections as well. Some of the sections had them, some did not. However, where the company changed a few words is totally unacceptable. The company did go back to original language where words were changed or put in different areas of a paragraph, however, there is that one stumbling block regarding the former pieceworker language. So until that is resolved, the contract will not be printed up.

As of January 1, 2009, there will be only one dental plan. That plan is called the Dental Enhanced Care Expense Plan. Members must pay 10% of the premium of this plan. The good news is at this time, the committee is working on getting discounts if you visit any of the Dental Associate clinics, which are Union facilities. The final details have not been worked out but we will be getting you the information soon.

Wisconsin State AFL-CIO Convention

Ralph Schwieger, Dennis Nowak, Jesse Edwards and I attended the Wisconsin State AFL-CIO Biennial Convention held on Sept 22-23. There were many interesting guest speakers. And once again the message was clear. Barack Obama is THE choice for working people.


LOCAL 2-232 REPORTER

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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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Website- www.pace7232.org
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Monday through Friday

The information contained herein is of informal nature and is not intended to be final and authoritative.
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Strattec Bargaining Committee: Scott Godshaw, Milton Dawson, Dennis Nowak, Al Olivares



ASK YOUR LAWYER
by Thomas Flanagan
Previant, Goldberg, Uelman, Gratz, Miller & Brueggeman, S.C.

DO I NEED AN "UMBRELLA" INSURANCE POLICY?

Everyone should have primary insurance coverage on such things as their car, house (or rental insurance), recreational vehicle or boat. The primary insurance covers claims against you if you are at fault in an accident. An umbrella policy is an additional level of insurance over and above your primary policy on these items. For a relatively small amount of money, you can usually get at least \$1 million of additional coverage in the event that a large claim is made against you.

You can also tie your umbrella policy into your motor vehicle policy's uninsured coverage and underinsurance coverage. These means that if you are injured by another driver who does not have insurance or who has inadequate insurance to cover your damages, your underlying uninsured or underinsurance will pay you and if you are seriously injured, you can then tap into your umbrella policy. This is again a small annual premium to tie the umbrella into your uninsured and underinsurance on your motor vehicle.

It is very important to have adequate insurance to protect yourself, not only if you are at fault, but if you are injured by someone who does not have sufficient coverage. Be sure to discuss all options with your insurance representative.

If you have questions, please contact Previant, Goldberg, Uelmen, Gratz, Miller & Brueggeman, S.C. at 414-271-4500 or 800-841-5232. You may also check us out at www.previant.com. Also, be sure to listen to WTMJ 620 AM on Saturdays at 12:00 noon for the Previant Legal Line, a live legal call-in show. (We may not be on the air if the Brewers, Packers, Bucks or Badgers are playing early on Saturday afternoon.)



UNION YES

News from Your Local 2-232 Rapid Response Coordinator

by Allen Evseichik

Dear Brothers and Sisters;

Just to give you a quick update on Rapid Response. The House voted in favor of the Employee Free Choice Act by a 241-185 vote. The Employee Free Choice Act also gained majority support in the Senate. A vote was 51-48 in favor (a majority, but not the 60 votes necessary). Obama has stated that if he becomes president and the legislation hits his desk, he will sign it into effect.

Our International President, Leo Gerard, had the honor of attending the Democratic Convention held in Denver. He described it as being truly inspiring. The party honored Ted Kennedy's contributions to working Americans. Hillary and Bill Clinton left no doubt in the minds of voters that their total support is for Barack Obama. Joe Biden got everyone's blood pumping when he talked about giving middle-class Americans a fair chance.

As of Friday, October 3, 2008, it can be noted that Senator McCain is conceding Michigan to Barack Obama after realizing that he just cannot win a state that has lost more jobs than any other this year. As a result of the failed trade policies of the Bush Administration, which John McCain has supported, Michigan lost more than 319,000 jobs since January. If you have any interest in Obama signs, t-shirts, etc. please visit his website at BarackObama.com.

In closing, I would again like to remind you that if you have the time and the desire, please become an active member in your union. Contact Greg Hines, USW Activist Corp Coordinator; Southern Wisconsin Cell (920)540-2309; West Allis Sub-District Office (414)475-4560; E-mail GHinds@usw.org. Above all, remember it is our privilege and our duty to vote.

In Solidarity,
Allen Evseichik
Local 2-232 Vice President
Rapid Response Coordinator



UPCOMING EVENTS

October 13 - Columbus Day



October 31- Halloween

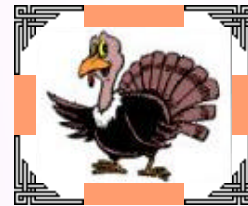


November 4 - Presidential Election

November 11 - Veteran's Day



November 27- Thanksgiving



December 7- Membership Meeting

December 25 - Christmas Day



January 1, 2009 - New Year's Day



Membership Meeting Recap

by Karen Clark

Our membership meeting was held on Sunday October 5, 2008. The meeting started at 9:30a.m. sharp at Frank Monreal's El Matador 9155 W. Bluemound Rd. in Milwaukee.

Due to not having a quorum, we were unable to conduct any business. The officers, however, did give their reports.

Vice President Allen Evseichik, in the absence of Scott Godshaw, gave the President's report.

He reported that the Briggs insurance packets were mailed out and open enrollment will be between October 6th and 19th. They will be going to 12 hour shifts in the powerhouse beginning on November 3rd. The Service Department has been on their Productivity Reward Program for 1 year now and it has been successful. And 35 members have signed up to retire at the end of the year.

At Strattec, it was reported that there is still some trouble with contract language, so printing of the books are still on hold until that issue is resolved.

Jesse Edwards reported on the Powerhouse going on 12 hour shifts, worker comp doctor appointments, the coil department being busy and continued problems at the Falls regarding extension of breaks.

Milton Dawson reported on department 55 at Strattec eliminating 3rd shift and having 1st and 2nd shift work 12 hours. He also reported on hiring a Waste Treatment Operator in that department and also on standards.

Ralph Schwieger reported on the discussion and vote at the December membership meeting regarding the potential dues increase for the Strike and Defense fund.

Ernie Dex reported on the upcoming presidential election. He stated Obama needs our help. If we lose this election, it will be "Shame on us".

Membership Information

September 2008

649 Members in Good Standing

436 in Briggs & Stratton Unit

213 in Strattec Unit

September Dues Payments

390 Dues Paying Members at Briggs

206 Dues Paying members at Strattec

596 Total Dues Paying Members

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

Briggs Retiree Club

Our fall and winter social activities has begun with our meeting that was held on September 17, 2008. You will be receiving our Calendar of Events for the rest of 2008 and 2009 as well, very soon. All of our meetings will be held at the Milwaukee Elk's Lodge at 5501 W. Good Hope Road on the third Wednesday of every month.

Dues are \$24 a year. You must be a paid up member to attend our events. Please see or call Erma Gorecki, our Financial Secretary Treasurer, for more information. Her phone number is 262-781-8951.

In October, we will begin our regular Bingo on the second Wednesday of the month. Also our Sheephead Tournament will be held every Tuesday.

On the month of your birthday or anniversary, please bring a dessert or pay \$7.00 for the committee to quickly obtain one.

Our Christmas party will be held at Alioto's 3041 N. Mayfair Road on December 7, 2008. The doors will open at 11a.m. for all paid up members. Spouses or companions are also welcome.

Special Notice: Please pay your 2009 membership dues at the October or November meeting to Erma Gorecki.

Please contact Doris Reinke at 414-476-3458 if you are aware of any members' illness.

Fraternally yours,

Doris Reinke

Recording & Corresponding Secretary

Bob Johnson

President

Join the Briggs Retiree Club

today call Erma Gorecki

262-781-8951

for information

Please pay your
2009 membership dues at the
October or November meet-
ing

*See some old friends and
meet some new ones*

Community Services

by Dolores Higgins

Brother and Sisters of Local 2-232:

Over the past 26 years, the Community Services Committee, along with assistance from Friends of Community Services, has provided help for our needy members. Our holiday drives were able to provide food from SHARE and all types of assistance throughout the year. These efforts helped make life a little easier for our members. This was especially true during Thanksgiving and Christmas. Not only food was provided but toys and warm clothing as well.

Union members, as well as salaried employees of Briggs & Stratton, contributed generously to make this all possible.

However, we now find it impossible to continue these needed services. The reason is simple; layoffs and declining membership. Due to a lack of contributions, the money is no longer available.

Friends of Community Services will disband due to lack of funds. There will not be any Thanksgiving or Christmas baskets this season. All transactions will cease at the end of December this year.

Community Services and Friends of Community Services wish to thank all the union members and salaried employees from Briggs & Stratton for their participation and hard work over the years for this worthy cause.

Local 2-232 Community Services will remain active as always. However, we will be without our dedicated members from Friends of Community Services, who as stated earlier, are financially unable to exist. We will hold all of our members in our prayers.

Community Services and Friends of Community Services wish all the best in the upcoming Holiday season with a brighter future in 2009. And one last thing, most importantly, use your God given right to VOTE. It's your future.

God Bless All,

Dolores Higgins

Chairperson Community Services

Grievance Rep Reports

Strattec Security

by Milt Dawson

Grievances

A grievance has been filed regarding the platting tech II job posting in dept. 55, job number 440. The company posted for the job, then after several workers inquired about it, and a few put in for the job, the company then turns around and says that they are now going to the outside to fill the position. The reason given, do to the fact that the company temporarily removed 3rd shift, they needed someone that already held a wastewater certified operators license, then the training time would be less. YEAH, RIGHT!

Set up "A" and "B" Training Progression Pay

The union is working together with the company to set forth a fair, safe and effective way for the trainee to get to the top of the pay scale in a more timely way based on how fast each person progresses, with the idea of "SAFETY FIRST".

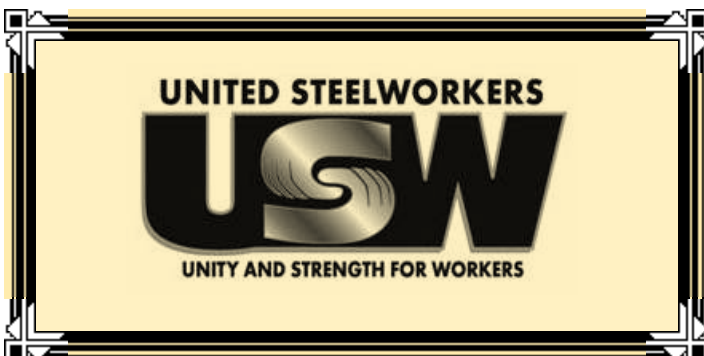
Safety

It should be and must be a well known fact that the union and company know and agree that safety must be put first above all. In saying that, I must say that when the company and union agree on putting together safety committees to look at safety issues in our work place, that this should not be done as window dressing or to just go through the motions of seriousness as a means of showing on paper that it's been looked at and signed off on. 20/20 hindsight is not a discussion we want to have after a break down in serious observations of safety. Let us all remember that safety is not just about committees and talking, it's about doing, practicing, follow through and education. I don't know about any other team, but this is one team we "ALL" need to get on and stay on, the "SAFETY TEAM".

United Steel Workers for Barack Obama

The United Steel Workers have put their unity and strength for workers behind Senator Obama for President on November 4th. Senator Obama voted with working families 98% of the time and voted 100% of the time in 2005 and 2006. He voted for the national minimum wage increase, the employee free choice act, he voted to protect overtime rights for 10 million workers, the list goes on and on when it comes to workers and families like ours. Brothers and Sisters, let us not, let a good thing get away, vote Barack Obama !

In Solidarity.
Milton Dawson



Grievance Rep Reports

Briggs & Stratton Second Shift

by Jesse Edwards

New Hires

The company has been hiring employees the past few weeks do to retirement. At the Menomonee Falls plant they plan to hire 10 employees and at the Burleigh plant they hired 6 assemblers in the Coil department. They also hired 1 in the Test house and 1 in the Power house. I would like to welcome all new hires and if you have any question or concerns please see the steward that represent your department.

M / F

In the last edition of the *Reporter*, it had been stated that our members were writing grievances in response to job complaints they received for going to the bathroom or being in the break area before and after their break. We met with the management of service and they stated that they don't have a problem with our members going to the bathroom or getting water. Their position is they felt the employees were extending their breaks and lunch periods.

Power House

The company met with the bargaining committee and stated they will be utilizing the contract language on page 62 seven day / twelve hour shift. The contract states if business condition warrant and if they give a 30 day notice they can implement this schedule. All involved have been notified. This is scheduled to start November 3, 2008.

Productivity Reward

The productivity reward period started on April 28, 2008 and it will end on October 26, 2008. This is for the former piecework departments 716 Mufflers and 797 Coils. To be eligible you would need to have worked 40 hours during the period and all new hires would have to complete their probationary period before October 26, 2008. However, you would be eligible for the next payout.

Production

Department 716 Mufflers was eliminated. Department 780 punch press is cutting back they are down to 1 setup per shift. The Coil department is busy at this time. All other areas reported no changes.

Vote

The presidential election is November 4, 2008. Make sure you vote. It is very important that you do so. Obama is for the working class and for keeping a true middle class. You can expect a large turn out, so be patient at the polls. This is the most important election in our lifetime.

In Solidarity,
Jesse Edwards

Briggs & Stratton First & Third Shift

by Dean Wegner

Discharge

There has been 1 member discharged due to attendance. I am currently working through the grievance procedure to help get his job back. However, with an attendance discharge, it is very difficult to do so because the points system is a no-fault system. If you are having any problems that are causing you to miss work, please see your steward or myself and we can offer you the help you need through EAP (Employee Assistance Program).

Rehab/Transitional Work Department

The company requires you to make your doctor, therapy or rehab appointment after work hours. If you need to make your appointments during work hours, it needs to be approved by the Briggs Worker Comp Department. If you have your appointment approved by them, then you will receive your worker comp pay that you are entitled to.

Heat Treat

The Heat Treat Department is going back to 8 hours shifts. They were previously on the 12 hour shifts.

Unemployment Hearings

I recently represented members at Unemployment hearings. If you are denied unemployment for any reason, you have the right to appeal that decision. On the flip side of that, if you are collecting unemployment, the company also has a right to appeal as well. In either case, the appeal will be heard by an Administrative Law Judge and he will reach his determination on the facts of the case presented at a hearing which is held at the State Building in downtown Milwaukee.

Day Light Savings

Remember to turn your clocks back 1 hour on Sunday November 2, 2008 as Day Light Savings ends. It is Spring ahead and Fall back. So at 3a.m. on November 2nd, it will become 2a.m.

In Solidarity,
Dean Wegner

October is National Breast



Cancer Awareness Month

Wellness Corner “You can’t live without it”

When you have heart disease: What you should know about lowering your LDL cholesterol? What should you know about cholesterol?

When you have heart disease: What you should know about lowering your LDL cholesterol What should you know about cholesterol?

Cholesterol is carried in the blood by lipoproteins:

- Low-density lipoproteins, or LDL, carry most of the cholesterol in the blood. LDL is called bad cholesterol. It can stick to the walls of arteries and lead to a build-up of fatty plaque.
- High-density lipoproteins, or HDL, help the body get rid of LDL. HDL is called good cholesterol. A high level of HDL is linked with a low risk for heart disease.
- Triglycerides are another fat in the blood. A high level of triglycerides may damage blood vessels and increase the risk for heart disease.

Why is the LDL level so important?

Most people with heart disease have too much LDL cholesterol. LDL is the main cause of blockage in the arteries. To lower your risk for future heart attacks, the most important thing you can do is lower your LDL level.

How should your cholesterol be checked?

People with heart disease need more than a “finger-stick” blood check. You will need a blood test called a lipoprotein profile. This test will break down your total cholesterol number into HDL, LDL, and triglycerides. You will need to fast – nothing to eat or drink except water – for 9 to 12 hours before this test.

What should your numbers be?

The latest guidelines show that if you have heart disease:

Ideally, your LDL level should be 100 or less. Any decrease in your LDL will help decrease your risk.

Your HDL level should be above 45 if you are a male, and above 55 if you are a female.

Your triglyceride level should be below 200.

What can you do to lower your LDL?

Take medication as prescribed. Your health care provider may prescribe medications that can lower your cholesterol by changing how your liver makes cholesterol. When you start taking the medication, you will be asked to have blood work to measure your progress and to watch for side effects.

Follow a low-fat meal plan, even if you take cholesterol-lowering medication. Eat more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Limit fats (especially saturated fat), meats, and high-fat dairy products.

Exercise regularly. Physical activity can help

lower your LDL and raise your HDL. It can also improve your heart and lung fitness and help you control your blood pressure, weight, and stress levels. Be sure to consult your health care provider before starting a new program.

Manage your weight. People who are overweight usually have higher blood cholesterol levels than people whose weight is normal. A low-fat meal plan and exercise should put you on the right track for weight control.

What if you do NOT have heart disease?

If you do not have heart disease and would like information on cholesterol management, you will want to check out the following resources:

Download a tool to help you figure out your risk for heart disease and what your target cholesterol should be.

Information on cholesterol screening recommendations and what your LDL, HDL, and triglyceride levels should be.

Locate cholesterol management events or classes online.

Healthy Corner

Here are some important numbers for
Briggs employees regarding your
health:

Health-Link - Access to immediate, confidential, healthcare expertise.
1-888-228-7672

Patient Care - Helping you through the healthcare maze.
1-877-344-7474
www.patientcare4u.com

Here is an important number for
Strattec employees regarding your
health:

United Health Care
Health care problems or questions, call
toll-free 1-866-827-9025
www.myuhc.com