



# USW Local 59 Newswire

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**In this Issue: Our last meeting and what is going on.**

## Last Month's Meeting

Our December meeting began with a moment of silence for Delmore Fine and Robert Kopelke who died this last month.

It was stated we lost 19 members in the last month with Michael Coots, Donald Dye, Lyle Gumz, Ronald Heil, David Kniprath, William Koester, Herman Kohls, Alfred Liggitt, James Pavlicek, William Payne, David Sliwiak, Wayne Teske, John Vinson and James Wesliaski retired and Micheal Altman, Michelle Czlapinski, Patrick Pazurek and Dawn Szajna withdrew.

The next order of business was the report by the law and legislative committee on changing the bylaws to let the Stewards attend the E board meetings. The committee recommended not changing the bylaws because the E board members are elected with the stewards appointed and the stewards inclusion would not help in the running of the meeting. This was made a motion by the membership and was approved so the bylaws would not be changed.

The election results were given with Harry Gerht receiving the most votes over Travis Olsen and Gary Filocco. We would like to congratulate Harry on his win and thank Travis and Gary for participating in the election.

The raise in the Union Dues was discussed for 2006. The reason for the raise was given as we are being increased in our per capita by the international and also have to contribute to the international a \$.01 per hour per member for a special as-

essment for organizing and strike funds. With the increases it was felt by the E board we must raise the dues \$1.50 per month and \$.01 per hour to cover all our anticipated increases in operating costs. This raise was approved by the membership and will take place on the January checks.

The membership decided to have a Christmas party next year and the date of December 9, 2006 was picked to have the Party.

Vice President Faretta reported on the Women of Steel conference she attended in Wisconsin Dells.

The wage adjustments we have pending with the company were discussed and a report on Share and Care for this year was given. It was reported 22 families were helped this year by the Share and Care and they thanked the membership for our continuing support.

No other business was discussed and the meeting adjourned.

## More Job Eliminations

The company announced they will be eliminating 100 jobs in our mills in 2006. Isn't it nice they deal in round numbers all the time and wait until Christmas time to pull this out of their hats. They claim they will be able to eliminate 15-25 salaried positions, 5-15 Clerical, 15-20 Maintenance with 40-60 of our members losing their jobs. The fact they are dealing in generalities means they have no idea yet how they will eliminate jobs just that they will. It becomes increasingly vital that our members give no reason for

the company to look at your job for elimination as they will be looking everywhere for where they will be cutting. We urge you to do your job safely and to the best of your ability. It is our hope that they do not cut us so far that 12s and 16s become daily occurrences as this cannot be cost effective or safe for our members to be working.

They claim this is the only way our mills can become profitable but it seems if the fuel costs go down and we start making some profitable paper maybe some of our jobs could be saved. Why is it that labor is the only place this company feels it can cut back on? There becomes a point when there are not enough people to do the job, then what will they do? Maybe a few less programs like good old PHIL and Genesis and a little more managing to create a profit and we might make one. Speaking of Genesis anyone walking through the Port Finishing can see how good that is working. You would think that since we are the last mills to "go online" they might have worked out the bugs and have a working program. There are so many orphan rolls in Port Finishing [rolls without orders] it is rumored the Genesis team is spending all their time trying to find orders and packaging for all of them and not taking care of any of the other problems that Genesis has created.

It is our hope attrition will help keep the number of those eliminated to a minimum and other cost control measures work to keep our membership losses to a minimum. We will

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keep the membership advised where the company intends to eliminate jobs when they let us in on their master plan [if they have one]. Until they do decide we cannot again emphasize that you continue to do your jobs safely and try not to give them any reason to be looking at your jobs as they will be looking everywhere.

### **A Few Fast Facts**

Here are a few fast facts from the AFLCIO:

A net 382,000 private sector jobs have been lost since President George Bush took office.

By July 2005, 7.5 million were officially jobless—but experts estimate the total number of unemployed and underemployed is nearly 13.4 million.

Nearly one in five unemployed workers has been jobless for 27 weeks or more.

Since August 2001, worker productivity in the United States grew by 4.1 percent, while worker compensation grew only 1.5 percent—meaning workers received one-third of the benefits of increased efficiency. In the previous seven business cycles, workers gained about 75 percent of those benefits.

Manufacturing jobs fell to 14.3 million in July 2005, lower than it was in July 1945.

The U.S. trade deficit is 14 times larger than in 1980. The trade deficit in goods grew to an estimated record \$651 billion in 2004, or \$1.78 billion a day. From 1994–2000, the trade deficit cost 3 million job opportunities and accounts for at least 40 percent of the decline in real wages since the 1970s.

Looks pretty bleak doesn't it.

### **The Union Dues Raise**

The membership decided at the last meeting to raise the Union dues \$1.50 per month and \$.01 per hour to cover the increases we face in January. Our per capita dues to the International will raise \$.77 at this time and our other anticipated costs of op-

eration of the local will make up the rest of the \$1.50. At the convention when the unions merged a \$.01 per hour assessment to cover organizing, strategic campaign and collective bargaining activities was added to our assesment. This will raise our dues an additional \$1.73 based on 173 hours per month (40 hours per week times 4.33 weeks a month) thus our dues will raise \$3.23 per month in January. This will raise the dues to \$36.73 per month.

### **This Month's Meeting**

This month's meeting will be held on Wednesday January 4th at 7 PM at the new Labor Hall in Wisconsin Rapids. Our agenda will contain a decision on who we will send to the Region 10 spring conference in St. Paul in March. We also must vote to send the President and Secretary/Treasurer to a financial class that is mandated in Neenah in February.

This is all we have on the agenda unless the company lets us know more on their plans for the job reductions. It might be a good time to get any questions you may have on anything bothering you before the membership so plan now on attending your Union meeting.

See you there.