



USW Local 59 Newswire

Volume: Seven Issue: Three March 2006

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

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Last Month's Meeting

Our last meeting began with a moment of silence for Clarence Kalke and Charles Brandt two former members who died.

The committee and steward appointments for 2006 were read. Our stewards for 2006 are Chris Gumz in Port machines, Al Repinski in the Port Beater room, Marv Goldberg in Port Sulfite, Keith Swenson in the chip plant, Rhonda Coates in Port shipping and Gary Filocco in Port Finishing. At Nekoosa Ron Pio and Pam Janicki in the Kraft Mill, Jeff Josie in the Machines and Kirk Hamilton in the treatment Plant will serve there.

President Kizewski gave a report on the National Paper Bargaining Conference he attended and discussed the National agenda items they presented there. He also gave a report on the Domtar Council meeting they had at the same time.

The membership voted to allow the purchase of a new computer for the office as the old one would no longer work with our accounting program.

It was reported a vote was taken on a wage adjustment offered by the company and it was turned down as not enough. We are still working on some wage adjustments with the company it was stated. It was reported we lost three jobs in the Port Finishing department when they eliminated the roll wrap helper.

The Trustees reported our year end audit came out with no problems. No other business was discussed and the meeting adjourned.

What's Going On

91% Increase in the Trade Deficit Over 3 Million Lost Jobs Trade Deficit Up 91% in 5 Years

The U.S. Department of Commerce released the latest figures on the trade deficit at the end of last week. We hit an all-time high of \$726 billion for 2005. This year, the biggest imbalance is again with China. We are importing \$202 billion more than we are exporting to them, which is a 24.5 percent increase from 2004.

What does a skyrocketing trade deficit mean for workers?

The trade deficit is the difference between our nation's imports and exports. As imports rise and exports dwindle, U.S. jobs in manufacturing take a hard hit.

Estimates show \$1 billion in new trade deficit means 10,000 jobs lost.

Year	Trade Deficit	Manufacturing Employment
2005	-\$726 billion	14.2 million
2004	-\$618 billion	14.3 million
2003	-\$495 billion	14.5 million
2002	-\$421 billion	15.3 million
2001	-\$363 billion	16.4 million
2000	-\$378 billion	17.3 million

Why do a majority of our elected officials seem uninterested in addressing this crisis?

The above was provided by the USW Rapid Response. When will the politicians learn that sooner or later if we lose all of our manufacturing jobs there will no longer be people with enough money to buy the products in the market place. This will only get worse with the job eliminations announced recently by

Ford and GM. The companies think that they can move manufacturing to non union, cheap labor countries and we will all still buy their products. In 6 years we have lost 3 million jobs in this country and what have they been replaced by? Cheap non Union service jobs if they have been replaced at all.

The situation in the Port Finishing department has not improved much. The Optivision and Genesis programs still do not appear to be working. There are still hundreds of rolls that are lost in the system and it has been estimated things will not improve anytime soon. It has taken almost a year to work the bugs out of the system in the other mills where the system has been implemented so it appears things will not improve soon. Here is hoping that things will improve as this will help the profit picture in our mills. It cannot be cost efficient to be hauling all those rolls back and forth between Warehousing of Wisconsin and the Finishing department and the only one making money now seems to be WOW.

There is still nothing definite on the job eliminations except as was reported in the monthly meeting minutes of the three jobs in the Port Finishing department. Strangely that department has added jobs as the relief has been put back on the cut sized operations and this makes 6 jobs back in our Union. Please continue to do your jobs safely and efficiently as the company will be looking at all jobs to make good on their promised job eliminations.

Letters to the Editor

A Port Edwards Beater Room Employees Viewpoint

We all agree there were too many injuries and recordables last year. It is more disappointing to us than it is to management after all we are the ones getting hurt.

This past year management cut the number of employees in the beater room by one third. Now we are working harder and faster than ever. These cuts helped us gain profit but increased the risk of our union employees getting injured.

What is troublesome is jobs were cut and we did our best to do our job safely and efficiently; with that many cuts there certainly was expected to be a learning curve on how to be more efficient and safe while keeping our standard of quality high. We were asked to increase quality and safety without any assistance from management. We asked managers to be present during our busy runs, runs nearly impossible to keep up with. Where were you Ross Stairs? Where were you Rick Hess? Where were you Dave Orr?

Now you are telling us that you are disappointed in giving us all 5% less on our profit sharing checks. Trust us you are not as disappointed as we are.

We do have another chance to improve our safety performance in 2006. Is management going to become more involved or not? Managements current method seems to be:

- A. Review safety rules
- B. Review safety Statistics
- C. Punish employees that get injured on the job.
- D. Review accidents after they occur.

We need more involvement from management than this. We need proactive measures to prevent injuries from occurring. Simply punishing employees after they become injured seems rather arcane and ineffective. We hope management becomes more helpful than simply pointing fingers

after accidents occur.

Lets all strive to have a safe 2006. (We want to hear from you. If you wish to submit something to the Newswire just send it to Secretary Devine and he will submit it for inclusion in the Newswire. Let your fellow members know how you feel.)

This Month's Meeting

This month our meeting will be held on Wednesday March 1st at 7 PM in the New Labor Hall in Wisconsin Rapids. We have nothing on the agenda for this meeting so it would be a perfect opportunity for our membership to come and bring up anything that is bothering them.

If you do not have any problems simply come and find out what is happening in your Union.

See you there March 1st.

The Union Difference Fast Facts

- Union workers' median weekly earnings are 28 percent higher than their nonunion counterparts.
- While only 16 percent of nonunion workers have guaranteed pensions, fully 70 percent of union workers do.
- 86 percent of union workers' jobs provide health insurance benefits, compared with only 59.5 percent of nonunion workers' jobs. Only 2.5 percent of union workers are uninsured, compared with 15 percent of nonunion workers.
- Median weekly wages for women union workers are 34 percent higher than nonunion women.
- Median weekly wages for African American workers in unions are 29 percent higher than for nonunion African Americans; for Latinos, the difference is 59 percent and for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, it is 11 percent.

The next time someone asks you

why you are in a union you can tell them why.