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June 2009 Edition

Local 1440

Letter from the President

Brothers and Sisters,

Happy summer to you all. Hopefully you have a week or two of vacation left to have some time off to do what you like to do, when you like. If not, at least we'll all have the 4th of July week off. This reminds me of a least 3 things. Number one – 1776, the year this great country declared its independence. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. What more could anyone want. Number two – it's a time to be especially SAFE. If you're driving, drive safe, and when you are playing, play safe. And when we come back to work, as always, work safe. This brings me to number three. If you had to take a week of vacation, or if you didn't have vacation and just got one day of holiday pay, who do you thank? Do you thank the company? Well you can thank them, I guess, for giving you the time off. But if you got paid for the week, or for just the day, you have to thank your Union. Our Union negotiated long ago to make sure we have vacation and holiday pay. Do you think that the company, out of the kindness of their heart, would pay you to stay home? Not for a minute! Do you think that they would pay us anything more than the minimum wage if they didn't have to? Don't bet on it. Remember, everything we have is because of our Union, and all the work our Union brothers and sisters have fought for in years past. Our wages, our benefits, our working conditions were all fought for and won by our Union. It's true that the company has a place for us to work, but it's the Union that does the work

I have heard that back in the day all the bosses, their associates, the wannabes, and some "relief foremen" all wore white hard hats. They were

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called "white hats". It was easy to tell the "good" guys from the 'bad' guys. All, except for "relief foremen", did not pay Union dues. They were not Union members, but many, if not most, rose from the ranks of the Union. Many knew what it meant to be a Union member. Many wished that when it came time to negotiate a contract, the Union got a big raise in wages and benefits. WHY? Because, back in the day, whatever the Union got management got. If Union members got a raise, management got a raise. If Union members got another holiday or vacation week, management got the same. So, in a way, just as we Union brothers and sisters have the Union to thank for everything we have, so does management, and whoever else is riding the back of the Union, its members, and everything we have fought for. Have a nice summer.

In Solidarity
Mark Valdez

RETIREMENTS

May

John Cavallo – 33 years service, worked as an Ironworker in the Sheet Division.

Pete Mercurio – 30 years service, worked as an Electrician in the HVAC Shop.

Congratulations and good luck to our Brothers on their retirement.

NOTICE UNION MEETING DATE CHANGE

Our Next Meeting will be on
July 16th
7:30 PM at the Union Hall
677 Cumberland St.
Pittsburg

CHECK OUT OUR LOCAL'S WEBSITE



www.usw1440.com

Grievance Committee

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Buzz Enea Jr. - | Chairman -Reliability |
| Mike Orlando - | Rolling |
| Joe Perez | Sheet |
| Steve Berendsen | Tin |
| Stephanie De La Rosa | M&I |

Call Hall at 432-7396 for Grievance Person Phone No.

Congress Hears Demands for Health Care Reform in Town Hall Meetings

Ohio Weighs In

After the rally, more than 250 activists from Ohio met at the Columbus Club at Union Station to plan for an afternoon of lobbying and hear from members of Congress about health care reform.

The session was introduced by Tim Burga of the Ohio AFL-CIO, who decried the "free market run amok" in the current health care system and affirmed that we must have a serious public health insurance option.

He introduced Hattie Wilkins, who made one of the most moving speeches of the event. Her situation illustrates the deep problems working families have with the way

the current system operates. Hattie is a member of the United Steelworkers (USW) union who worked for 35 years for Brentwood Originals, a pillow factory in Youngstown, Ohio. The USW struck Brentwood Originals in 2008, and more than three-quarters of the workforce has been laid off. She was fired because of her strong support for the union, Hattie said. She has been collecting \$887 a month in unemployment since then. She has COBRA coverage, and now pays \$275 per month—31 percent of earnings from unemployment—for her health insurance. She pays another \$450 per month for her mortgage payment, leaving her only \$162 each month for food, utilities, transportation and all her other expenses. Now her unemployment payments are ending and she doesn't know what she is going to do.

At 58 years of age, Hattie is searching for another job at places like McDonald's but has to compete with applicants much younger than she is. She gave us her cell phone number, though she wasn't sure how much longer she would have it. Hattie came to Washington, D.C., to participate in the rally and make sure her elected representatives heard her voice on this critical issue.

The Latest on Pennsylvania Town Hall

Sen. Specter has arrived, and compliments the crowd on its tenacity and commitment. Specter says he agrees that health care is a right and believes health care legislation will pass and will include a public option component. Of course, in a room full of union members, the Employee Free Choice Act came up. Specter says he is working hard to find an answer for early union certification and gaining first contracts.

From the North Carolina Meeting

Sen. Kay Hagan just arrived. She says the fight for health care reform is the "most important thing going on in our country." Everyone in America must have health care coverage, she says, and patients with pre-existing conditions should be able to get health insurance.

About a public health insurance option plan, Hagan says some critics are getting caught up in nuance about language used in the debate. "I don't care what you call it as long as it provides affordability accessibility and covers pre-existing conditions," she says. We'd heard earlier reports that her staff told union leaders Hagan believes if health care reform passes, it will include a public option. The senator herself did not specifically say she supports the public option.

I think the key is if you have health insurance, you keep it. We don't want to dismantle what exists.

Pennsylvania Town Hall

Hundreds of union members from Pennsylvania have packed a hall just a block from the U.S. Capitol to hear from their elected officials on the status of real health care reform. As they wait for Sen. Arlen Specter (D) and Rep. Joe Sestak (D) to appear, the chanting is in full force:

Congress, This is our demand. The option of a public plan.

What do we want? HEALTH CARE!

When do we want it? NOW!

Congress, This is our demand, the option of a public plan!

We are waiting for Specter and Sestak so we can spring that on them.

Rep. Kathy Dahlkemper (D) did not attend. A staff member is delivering her talking points.

Health care reform that guarantees quality, affordable health care reform must be passed.

We must ensure that patients' choices are protected.

Maryland Town Hall

Sen. Barbara Mikulski, Rep. John Sarbanes and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer speak to hundreds of Maryland workers and all support public option.

Rep. Blumenauer at Town Hall on Small Business

At a town hall focused on small business issues this morning at the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) advocated a [2] [public insurance option plan](#), guaranteed coverage and a "pay or play" system that would require businesses to provide health care coverage for their employees or pay into a fund. These reforms would level the playing field and reduce cost burdens on small businesses, he said.

Financial Secretary's Report

I included the above article because the new rates for health care insurance go into effect on July 1st. The premium rates have DOUBLED for our retirees. Some of our members who have been on lay off have lost their medical insurance. There is stimulus money to offset 65% of the cost of the COBRA premium, but when the COBRA is \$2000 a month for a family, that is a lot of money out of their pocket. It's outrageous the cost of health care today. We all need to do something to help pass HEALTH CARE REFORM. When you have time, please visit these websites: www.heathreform.gov, www.edlabor.house.gov.

We need to be better informed on this issue that is bankrupting our retirees, so when a bill is introduced, we will know the facts.

Linda Doppe

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In Memoriam

Ron Arvizu

Brother Arvizu, 50, passed away on May 16, 2009. He retired in 2008 with 21 years of service. He worked as a Train Crew in Transportation before his retirement.



Tino Fulimeni Memorial Scholarship
2009 Application

To be eligible, an applicant must

- have maintained at least a 3.0 grade point average in the past,
- be starting or returning to college in the fall of 2009 or spring of 2010, and
- be the child/grandchild of a steelworker who is eligible to participate in the Career Development Program.

Applicant's Name: _____

Home address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Home Phone (Include area code): _____

Sponsoring Steelworker's Name and Local Union Information:

Place of Employment:

Relationship to Sponsor: _____

Name of College: _____

If chosen, I agree to provide the Institute for Career Development a copy of my past official transcript, along with any other qualifying information requested.

Student's
Signature: _____ Date: _____

Due by **SEPTEMBER 15, 2009** via *mail*:

Institute for Career Development
1000 E. 80 Place, Suite 301 South
Merrillville, IN 46410

or FAX to 219-736-9216.

APPLY ONLY ONCE PER YEAR.