

LOCAL 381 NEWS



January 2006

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Workplace Benefits

Bargaining Survey

381 Web Site

*Improving Your
Credit Rating*

WORKPLACE BENEFITS: NOT THE RESULT OF EMPLOYERS' BENEVOLENCE OR GOODWILL

You may have seen bumper stickers on vehicles as you drive down the highway that read, "The Labor Movement: The Folks Who Brought You the Weekend."

What exactly does that mean? Well, in a nutshell, it means that many workplace benefits that we all take for granted were issues that were fought for and won by organized labor.

Consistently over the years, it has been labor unions that have waged the battle (and it has always been a battle) for improvements for workers—whether in a collective bargaining agreement or through legislation. These include: the non-working weekend; child labor laws; the 40-hour work week; overtime premium pay; employer-paid health insurance and disability insurance; paid vacation leave; leaves of absence; health and safety legislation; child care and elder care provisions; paid holidays; due process through a grievance and arbitration procedure; decent wages; job security; workplace...

see "workplace benefits" pg. 2

BARGAINING SURVEY

A couple of weeks ago union stewards were given bargaining survey forms. These forms are to be filled out and turned in to a workmen's committee member by March 1st, 2006. These forms will serve as proposal forms.

There is nothing wrong with individual proposals but the committee would rather the union body compose proposals as a group. We feel the best way to collect proposals is not individually but by group. If you still feel the need to fill them out individually, not a problem just make a copy and turn it back in to your steward. A list of stewards names are on page two of this newsletter.

With contract negotiations fast approaching these forms will give the workmen's committee the ability to evaluate the importance of specific issues.

Thanks for your help.

LOCAL 381 WEB SITE

Local 381's web site has a few changes. You may now access the company/union bargaining agreement from a link on the web site instead of going through the forum. You must have adobe acrobat installed in order to do so.

There are also grievance investigation forms available for download. This will make it convenient for anyone to collect facts about a possible grievance and turn it in to your steward.

Local 381 also has a new e-mail address, it is iuoe381@gmail.com

Thanks goes to **El Dorado Printing** for printing and folding these newsletters for all local 381 members. El Dorado Printing has met the needs of Local 381 for many years. Support your local community!

LION FEDERAL CREDIT UNION



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THANKS FOR THE ARTICLE



Thanks to the steward that submitted the article on improving your credit rating. These type issues are important to all of us. If anyone else feels they have something to contribute to the newsletter, please feel free. Just send your submission it to iuoe381@gmail.com

We must learn to live together as brothers or we are going to perish together as fools.

—[Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)

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ALAN B. HUGHES PRESIDENT

...non-discrimination; and other major intangibles like dignity and respect in the workplace.

WORKPLACE BENEFITS

Many of these issues have been won over time, with labor working in coalition with other spearhead groups. These also include many of the broader social issues, such as: Social Security; Medicare; civil rights legislation; Fair Labor Standards Act; family and medical leave; and OSHA to name a few.

Which side are you on?

Consistently throughout history, management and employers were on the wrong side of these issues. None of these improvements in American workers' lives were given out from the goodness or generosity of the boss. The boss always had an argument why anything that stood to enhance working conditions would cripple their business. This was the case in:

- The late 1800s with the push for the 40-hour work week
- The early 1900s with the drive to eliminate and regulate the use of child labor
- The 1970s and the initiation of health and safety regulations through OSHA
- 1993 with the passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act

The arguments of doom and gloom have always repeated themselves. That's why it is important to remind ourselves collectively how the workplace improved. It was Thomas Jefferson (with a sometimes controversial quote, "Every generation needs a new revolution") who realized early in the history of the American republic that the benefits and freedoms enjoyed in this country would be taken for granted by later generations who never experienced first-hand all of the sacrifices made to achieve those gains. Much is the same in labor today.

Collective amnesia In today's workplace many workers forget—or never had the opportunity to learn—when or where all of these benefits came from. Some workers assume that these benefits are simply a part of the package that employers unilaterally want to offer employees. Others point to non-union workplaces where some or even many of these benefits are also in place.

It is important to recognize that many non-union facilities are forced to offer some of the benefits that labor has won elsewhere simply to attract and retain employees and to remain competitive in the labor market. These benefits are not offered as a result of the employer's benevolence. Furthermore, in non-union worksites, all benefits that are not protected as a part of legislation are not enforceable because of the lack of a contract. That is, the employer can choose to ignore or to use...

see "workplace benefits" pg. 4

Officers		Workmen's committee
President	-Robert Warbington	Robert Warbington
Vice President	-Tracy Smith	Woodie Walthall
Rec. Secretary	-Woodie Walthall	Tony Hooks
Financial Sec.	-Jeff Kratzer	Trey Brown
Treasurer	-Trey Brown	Tracy Smith
Stewards		
Randy Henry, David Smith, Lonnie Washington, Keith Evans, Bill Riggs, Keith Pridgen, Ricky Hargett, John Bankston, Roger Morris, Charlie Scott, Richard Hayes, Bud Evans, Joe White		

IMPROVE YOUR CREDIT RATING

To...

- Aid approval for credit for mortgages, car loans, installment loans, and credit cards.
- Decrease the interest rate you'll get on loans.
- Lower the cost of your homeowners and car insurance.
- Make you and your union stronger.

There are just a few simple strategies that will make a big difference:

- Pay your bills on time.
- Getting a new credit card or installment loan can raise your score as long as you don't have too high a balance and you pay it off in a timely manner.
- Keep your balance low in relation to your available credit. If your credit limit is \$10,000, keeping your balance **below** \$2,500 (25%) will improve your score.
- Order a copy of your credit report...

Your credit report is your face to businesses. Review it carefully. Go to www.annualcreditreport.com which is the only authorized source for consumers to access their annual credit report online for free. Or, call 877-322-8228.

If there are errors on your report, you can either complete the dispute form provided with your credit report or write a letter to the reporting agency. Clearly identify each mistake and state why it's wrong. A recommendation is to send a photocopy of your credit report with the mistakes circled to the reporting credit bureau. Include copies of supporting documents.

To give you a feel for the importance of your strategic moves, consider how the FICA Score is calculated:

Types of Credit in Use:-----10%
 Payment History:-----35%
 Amounts Owed:-----30%
 Length of Credit History:---15%
 New Credit:-----10%

Types of credit include: mortgages, major credit cards, department store credit cards, car loans, installment loans. Payment history includes: information from public records, such as bankruptcies, liens, lawsuits, foreclosures, judgments, and wage garnishments, details of any missed or late payments, such as the amount, how long ago it occurred, how late it was.

--Longer good credit history equals a higher score--

A CHRISTIAN
PERSPECTIVE

HAZMAT

Who said it...

Jeff Caliguire

Jeff Caliguire is a Cornell University and Dallas Seminary-educated entrepreneur who wrote [Leadership Secrets of Saint Paul](#) (Cook, 2003) after learning many of them the hard way. "I simmered over things that weren't going my way," he says. "I painted worst-case scenarios. My depression affected my marriage, my health, and my children." Ultimately, he says, like the apostle, we must begin to see ourselves as servants if we expect to be truly effective over the long haul.

What he said...

HAZMAT

A number of years ago, my brother Todd discovered a greenish, toxic rust flowing underground from an auto junkyard, making its way into a stream, then flowing through our backyard on its way to a lake. It quickly became apparent that residue from this ancient metal was polluting our water supply and possibly affecting our health.

A town commission approved the obvious solution: remove the source of this hazardous waste by digging up the decomposing cars. Sooner was better than later.

Like this buried waste, unresolved tensions make their way to the surface in our lives and affect our leadership. Resentment is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "a sense of injury or anger arising from a sense of wrong." Resentments take the breath out of our work and can actually dull our vision. They zap our energy and steal the enjoyment of working with others. They build up over time and rarely dissipate on their own.

Prayer for the week.

I need Your power, Lord, to root out resentments and replace them with trust in how You are shaping my circumstances.



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WORKPLACE BENEFITS

...“management’s discretion” in providing or continuing benefits. Such benefits have not become part of the workplace “social contract” as it has in many other countries. Every gain has been fought for—often with blood, sweat and tears—and they are always in danger of being lost.

Employers have fought all of these benefits repeatedly using the same old and stale tactics and arguments, such as “the need for management flexibility,” or the right to exercise management’s prerogative to run the business, or—the most over-used one of all—business cannot afford to operate with such onerous laws that require a minimum wage, or safe working conditions, or bans on child labor, or family leave, etc. Allegedly, these employers won’t be able to compete as a result and it will be the end of Western civilization as we know it.

Of course, none of that has happened. What has happened is that because of labor’s constant struggle over many of these issues, the workplace is a better and safer place to work. And yes, more rewarding financially as well as personally.

Unions remain a progressive force in the United States today, even as its numbers decline in the face of multi-pronged attacks. They are among the most democratic, dynamic and diverse organizations in the country. As organized labor is under attack it has responded by joining coalitions in social justice movements and broadening its own vision. History has shown unmistakably that it is organized labor that has fought for employee rights and against the race to the bottom.

Abraham Lincoln said in his first message to Congress, “Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves the much higher compensation.”

*excerpt reprinted by permission by – Joe Twarog
Associate Director, Labor Education & Training—MNA*

Local 381

UPCOMING UNION MEETINGS:

February 7th, 2006

March 7th, 2006

April 4th, 2006

Union Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at 4:00pm at the UA Local 706 building. Located at 418 West Main, just west of the Minute Man in El Dorado.

This is a quarterly newsletter brought to you by International Union Of Operating Engineers (AFL-CIO) local 381 and the business’ and organizations advertised within this newsletter.