

REPORTER



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF USW LOCAL 2-232

VOLUME 27, NO.7

DECEMBER 2006

Strattec offers Buyouts

by Scott Godshaw

With the previous announcement of the elimination of the Strattec Service Department in Milwaukee, the company and the Bargaining Committee met and came up with several options for the people whose jobs were affected.

The total job loss would be approximately 40 people.

Members who already had 30 years and could retire now, could choose to retire on January 1st and receive a \$15,000 buy out supplement.

Members with 29 years that are eligible to retire next year, would go on voluntary layoff on January 1, 2007, receive a \$5000 buyout supplement and retire on July 1, 2007.

Members with 28 years that are eligible to retire in 2008, would go on voluntary layoff on January 1, 2007. Their insurance would be bridged through June of 2008 and then retire under the current contract on June 28, 2008.

Other members in the Service area that do not fall under these categories and have more than 5

years of seniority, would be eligible for a severance offer.

Also at the company discretion, retirement options will be offered to other affected members eligible to retire under this contract if a replacement with the appropriate skills and background is available to fill their position.

Severance offers would again also enter into the picture. If not enough people would take one of the previous offers then the company would offer severance for any member outside the service area that had more than 5 years if there was a qualified replacement..

Although it is very disappointing that the Service Department will be moved out of Milwaukee, at least some of the members will be able to enjoy the benefits of the proposed retirement options and the severance offers as well.

Members had through Monday November 27, 2006 to decide whether or not they wanted to take one of the buyouts that they were eligible for.

January Membership Meeting

Sunday
January 21, 2007
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.
- Nominations for all grievance rep positions and Trustee at Large

Notice:

Nominations will be taken for all Grievance Rep positions and Trustee at Large at the January Membership Meeting to be held on Sunday January 21, 2007 at Frank Monreal's El Matador 9155 W. Bluemound Rd. at 9:30 a.m.

Labor 2006 On the Campaign Front Lines A Good Reason to Volunteer

by Paul Gordon, National AFL-CIO

"It's unbelievable what's happening in this country," says Ralph Schwieger. "It's like Teflon: it doesn't stick. You see it in the news one day and the next week it's gone. In my opinion, this country should be up in arms and asking what's going on."

A member of United Steelworkers Local 2-232, Schwieger is a setup man at STRATTEC Security Corp. in Milwaukee, which makes locks and keys for the Big Three in the domestic auto industry.

Three main issues concern him this election year: good jobs, health care and the war in Iraq.

First, jobs. "Milwaukee is one of the poorest cities in the country and we've lost a huge amount of our manufacturing base," says Schwieger. "This city is in real bad shape for finding family-supporting jobs. When you lose your job at a union factory and have to go to a lower-paying job, you might be working three jobs to replace the income you lost on that one good job."

As the Big Three suffer losses, STRATTEC feels the crunch. "Last week, we just had a layoff of about 10 people," Schwieger notes. "And management just announced that they're going to permanently eliminate 40 of our jobs by the end of the year and move them to Mexico."

The problem isn't just at STRATTEC. "I have a neighbor who was a mechanic for the transit system in Milwaukee," he says. "It's been a nightmare for him. He has a wife and two children still in the house, and he's trying to find decent work and someplace that will provide health care. He's exhausted his savings."

Health care has long been a concern to Schwieger and his co-workers. "In negotiations, every time we go in, health care is always a contentious issue, to say the least," he says. "We've been forced into the 'Healthy Consumer Plan,' they call it. That's another way they're shifting the cost from the corporation onto our backs. The deductibles went through the ceiling. After the last contract, I lost a dollar an hour, and when you combine that with the added costs of this Healthy Consumer Plan, it's bad for me personally all around."

The war in Iraq is also a deciding factor for Schwieger. "We've got ourselves into a mess over there that we're going to leave for my grandchildren," he says. "I just do not see an end to this at all. We

have 47 million people in this country who don't have health insurance, and the waste and fraud alone that's going on in Iraq could probably pay for national health care—and that doesn't say anything about our own troops and the Iraqis that have been slaughtered. I can't believe how this is being allowed to happen."

In the past, Schwieger has been a rank-and-file volunteer in USW political activities. Now, he's on release time from STRATTEC and temporarily working full-time for USW's campaign for Labor 2006.

"We're in a member-to-member campaign," he explains. "That involves phone banking, member-to-member walks and leafleting at all of the USW worksites. Our goal is to put out four fliers before the election. We're standing out at the plant gates, putting leaflets in members' hands that compare the candidates on different issues."

"Personally, I've done phone banking, member-to-member walks, leafleting. We just had our state AFL-CIO convention a couple weeks ago, and the statistics are that 81 percent of union members will vote with the union-recommended candidate if they're given a flier, and it's put in their hands by another union member."

Schwieger's working hard to recruit his union sisters and brothers to volunteer for Labor 2006. "My plan today is, I went to the union office," he says. "Right after I get off the phone with you, I'm going to call the members who were already laid off. I'm going to see if they have time to volunteer on the campaign. This year, they have a good reason to volunteer."

Editor's Note: Our Brother Ralph Schwieger was interviewed by Paul Gordon. Gordon wrote this article that was originally submitted and published on the National AFL-CIO website.



Ralph Schwieger
USW 2-232



Membership Meeting Recap

by Karen Clark

The membership meeting was held on Sunday December 3, 2006 at Frank Monreal's El Matador at 9:30a.m. sharp.

Under application for membership, eleven (11) new members were voted in.

Ralph Schwieger gave the Trustee report for the months of September and October.

Ross Winklbauer gave the Financial Secretary/Treasurer's report for September and October. Ross reported that there were 561 dues paying members at Briggs and 267 members at Strattec for a total of 828 dues paying members in September. He also reported there were 568 members at Briggs and 259 members at Strattec for a total of 827 dues paying members for October.

All reports can be seen at our Local Union office located at 8500 W. Capitol Dr.

Communications

We received a thank you note from MCLC for our donation to the State Fair Label Booth.

Executive Board recommended motions that passed were as follows:

- A donation of \$250 given to the Briggs Retiree Club and a donation of \$100 given to the Strattec Retiree Club
- Renew our membership with the Wisconsin Labor History Society at a cost of \$100
- A donation of \$75 to the Wisconsin Labor History Society for their essay contest.
- A donation of \$150 to the Hunger Task Force for Holiday baskets.
- A donation of \$100 each for United Way for Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County.
- Purchase a \$175 gasoline gift card for Dolores Higgins. She does so much for EAP, for the SHARE program and so much more. She continues to help our members.
- Place our Holiday ad in the Labor Press Holiday edition at a cost of \$125.

Reports of Officers

President Scott Godshaw reported on the loss of the Service Department and the specific buyouts and severance offers that were offered at Strattec and also meeting with AON, the underwriter for insurance rates also at Strattec. Godshaw reported on the voluntary layoff instead of shutting down Thanksgiving week and the Productivity Reward at Briggs. And he reported on the new Steward Committee and the upcoming nominations that will be held at the next membership meeting. And he wished all a Happy

President's Report by Scott Godshaw

Here's to a Happy Healthy 2007

In 2006, we saw many members retire. Congratulations to them all. With that also comes a declining membership as not all were replaced.

Both companies at this point are very slow. Optimism is a very cautious word. We just need to continue doing our jobs to the best of our ability and hope things will soon pick up.

Briggs

At Briggs, the company wanted to shut down operations at Burleigh all Thanksgiving week. The Bargaining Committee met with the company and had suggested instead of completely shutting down to allow the people that wanted to work the opportunity to do so. We were strong in our belief that shutting down all Thanksgiving week was a violation of the contract. The company came back to us and said instead of shutting down completely, they were going to offer voluntary layoffs in areas that needed to cut back starting on Monday November 27th. Most of 3rd shift was affected. A total of 18 people were laid off, 9 of which took the voluntary layoff.

Strattec

At Strattec, with the elimination of the Service Department in Milwaukee, we are still finalizing the buyout offers of which members had to declare their choices on November 27th. A few glitches have come up but we are working through them.

I would like to wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season and a Happy Healthy 2007.

Holiday Season.

Jesse Edwards reported on the Heat Treat Department layoff, the 6 week layoff language to bump back in and bereavement during the Christmas shutdown.

Dan Badzinski reported on the Steward Training sessions. He would like to see more stewards participate as he, along with the rest of the committee, as well as co-chairs Jesse Edwards and Al Olivares put a lot of work into these workshops.

International Rep Ernie Dex reported the latest news on the Goodyear strike. Goodyear wants to shut down plants here in the USA and send the jobs to China. He also discussed the "Adopt a Family" program for a striking member at Goodyear.

The next membership meeting will be held on Sunday January 21, 2007 at 9:30a.m. at Frank Monreal's El Matador 9155 W. Bluemound Road in Milwaukee. Nominations will take place at that meeting for all the Grievance rep positions and the Executive Board position of Trustee at large as well.

Strattec Corner

by Al Olivares

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

As I write this, Mother Nature is bringing her wrath down on our beautiful city. It is a giant evil snowglobe. Seriously though, as weather conditions become more challenging, please be more careful. Attempt to leave earlier, buckle up and drive accordingly. We lose enough members by way of job loss, we don't want to lose anymore.

As we get closer to the holiday season, we also get closer to last call for our Service Department. On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank all the members for the great job they have done and all their efforts to help save it. It was a valiant effort, unfortunately, Corporate Greed had its way with us again. To all of you, whether staying or leaving, know that it was not your fault and you have nothing to be shameful of. Good Luck to you and all of us as we drive on.

In more recent news at Strattec de Milwaukee, it was brought to all of our attention, that we just received new Die Cast business, which is of great volume. This is in addition to the recent Epsilon business we were awarded by way of the vast alliance. Strattec is one-third of this automotive supplier triumphant. With all this going on in Die Cast, Punch Press area is receiving its newest addition. The large press which I am now dubbing "The Strat Giant" is arriving by way of 3 semi-trailers. Two of which already made their deliveries to 3333 W. Good Hope Road. I still hope all this will attempt to stop the bleeding of work leaving our wonderful snow-bound facility.

Finally, I want to wish everyone a very happy holiday (Feliz Navidad). Be safe and have a great time. Upon our return from the holidays, we will start kicking butt with our new business!

One final note, a handshake or a gentleman's agreement is no different than a contract. It is somewhat of an old school thought. I know, however, I was raised that your word is bond. Any deviation, and I do mean any is a breach of your agreement. Even though that deviation may be positive, it could possibly put the other party in somewhat of a pickle. So, just some food for thought, be a man or woman of your word and see it through! At the end of the day, you will feel better for it.

Happy Holidays,
Big Al

Briggs Retiree Club

Here I am writing the last newsletter for 2006. We, the committee, want to wish you all The Best of Holidays. Have a happy and a safe one.

On Sunday December 3rd, we had our annual Christmas dinner at Alioto's.

Remember, you must be a paid up member to attend any of our events. Call Erma Gorecki at 262-781-8951 for more information. Dues are only \$24 a year. All you retirees, come join our club. You will meet some of your old friends and perhaps make some new ones.

Members with birthdays and anniversaries in December, please bring your treats to our January meeting. Also in January, remember to bring your \$5 door prize for next year's monthly drawings.

Our thanks to Briggs & Stratton for all their help in keeping our club going and also to our Local Union, USW 2-232, for their help as well.

Thanks a million and our best wishes to you for the Happiest Holiday Season and for 2007.

Our events for 2007 include Bingo on the 2nd Wednesday of every month. And on the 3rd Wednesday of the month will be our meeting. Doors open at 11a.m. and the fun begins at noon. Get your schedule for the year at any of our events.

Our get well wishes go out to Geri Kunda and Marv and Joan Fry.

Remember, sheephead is played every Tuesday at noon at the Legion Post #449 on 3245 N.124th Street. It's free and prizes are awarded at each table.

Come to our regular club events to pick up your **Reporter** or go online at www.pace7232.org

Wishing you all Happy Holidays and God Bless
Till next time,

Frances C. Capello

Corresponding Secretary 262-251-7514

**Join the Briggs Retiree Club
today call Erma Gorecki 262-
781-8951 for information**

Editor's note: I would personally like to thank Frances Capello for her Retiree Club newsletters so I can place them in every issue of the **Reporter**.

Thanks,
Scott Godshaw



ASK YOUR LAWYER

by Thomas Flanagan

Previant, Goldberg, Uelman, Gratz, Miller & Brueggeman, S.C.

IS THERE AN APPEAL FROM A WORKER'S COMPENSATION HEARING?

Either the injured worker, the employer, or the employer's worker's compensation insurance carrier may appeal an adverse decision of the administrative law judge (ALJ). The appeal is to the Labor and Industry Review Commission (LIRC), the members of which are appointed by the governor. It is a "paper appeal" in that no new testimony is taken. LIRC reviews the record that was developed at the hearing. LIRC has the power to either uphold or overturn the ALJ's decision. Although the ALJ has considerable discretion in determining which witnesses to believe or not to believe in making findings in the case, LIRC actually has the final say as far as the official decision of the Worker's Compensation Division. Therefore, LIRC can overturn the ALJ, and LIRC's decision is the final decision of the Division. Thereafter, the appeal levels are to the circuit court, court of appeals, and the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

If you have questions about worker's compensation, personal injury, or social security disability, please feel free to call the Previant, Goldberg, Uelman, Gratz, Miller & Brueggeman law firm at 414-271-4500 or toll free at 1-800-841-5232.

Local 2-232 Legal Clinic

Do you have legal questions or problems facing you or your family?

Have you suffered a major personal injury? If you have, or if you have any other legal problem, Local 2-232 is providing free legal consultations with lawyers from the law firm of Previant, Goldberg, Uelman, Gratz, Miller & Brueggeman at the Local 2-232 Union office, 8500 W. Capitol Dr. Legal clinic hours: 1:00P.M. to 4:00P.M. First Monday of the month. Call for an appointment 414-463-7425.



Was your Steward at the Meeting?

The following stewards attended the Steward Training Session held on November 8, 2006: Nick Schrimpf, Roger Sorenson, Dan Turk, Tony Pipia, Lesa O'Neal, Dean Wegner, Vicky Black, Mark Auer, Cathy Kacmarek, Dave Gavinski, Bill Berdan and Jerry Plieth.

The following is a complete list of all the current stewards:

Briggs

1st shift

472- Sue Mezouane
348- Lesa O'Neal
721, M7R- Marianne Groshek
797- Dennis Kaminski
111, 132- Dave Gavinski
700- Eddie Sparks
476, 953- Jeff Cherney
760, 765, 770- Dean Wegner
771, 752- Vicky Black
719, 780, 781, 782- Jerold White
735- Mark Auer
243, 716, 238- Dan Smukowski

2nd Shift

105, 720, 721- Nick Schrimpf
476-700- Kurt Schlag
472- Karen Nichols
797- Hattie Marshall
735-Ron Bober
752, 771, 780- Roger Sorenson
242, 243, 716, 781-Dawn Heffner

3rd Shift

476, 700- Keith Kelling
760, 765, 780, 781- Cathy Kacmarek

Strattec

1st shift

51, 836- Joe Wentz
50- Bill Berdan
54, 55, 72- Jerry Plieth
71- Yolanda Turner
58, 59, 60, 68- Randy Neiman

2nd Shift

50, 54, 55, 71- Tony Pipia
51, 58, 59, 60, 64, 68, 77, 90- Dan Turk

3rd Shift

51, 58, 59, 64, 68, 77, 90- Chad Mathews

UPCOMING EVENTS



**December 23 through January 1-
Christmas Holiday**



**January 15, 2007- Martin Luther
King Jr. Day**

**January 21, 2007- Membership
Meeting**



February 14- Valentine's Day



February 19- President's Day

Seasons Greetings



from USW Local 2-232

News From USW:

Nationwide Protest Will Target Goodyear for 'Abandoning America's Workers, Retirees and Communities'

PITTSBURGH — The AFL-CIO will join the United Steelworkers (USW) in launching a nationwide Day of Action against Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company (NYSE:GT) “to protest Goodyear’s assault on the economic security and basic rights of working families and Steelworker members, as well as current and future retirees,” the USW and AFL-CIO announced today.

In a meeting in Washington today, the Federation’s Executive Council voted unanimously to:

- Discredit Goodyear’s abandonment of American manufacturing, workers, retirees and their communities;
- Join with Steelworker members on informational actions at stores selling Goodyear products;
- Condemn Goodyear’s assault on the health security of its workers and retirees as destructive to organized labor’s ongoing efforts to win accessible and affordable health care for all; and
- Encourage employers with whom affiliates have contracts, both private and public, to abandon the use of Goodyear tires as original or fleet equipment, until such time as Goodyear relents in its unconscionable demands and shameless hypocrisy and reaches a reasonable and equitable agreement with the United Steelworkers.

“Together, the Steelworkers and the AFL-CIO will make sure the tire-buying public understands the real facts about Goodyear’s demands to abandon America’s workers, retirees and communities,” added USW President Leo W. Gerard.

Goodyear forced 15,000 USW members in 16 plants in North America out on strike October 5. Despite innovations delivered by the union and concessions taken by its members and retirees in the 2003 contract that contributed to a billion-dollar turnaround in the company’s bottom line since 2002, Goodyear continued to insist on additional plant closings and more concessions in this round of bargaining.

The AFL-CIO is the nation’s largest umbrella organization of unions, representing 10 million working men and women nationwide. The USW is the largest industrial union in North America, representing more than 850,000 workers in the U.S. and Canada. Some 70,000 are employed in the tire, rubber and plastics industry.

Grievance Rep Reports

Briggs & Stratton Second Shift

by Jesse Edwards

Restrooms

The company informed the union about their plan to close a number of restrooms. The company stated that due to cost and less employees, there was no need to keep all restrooms open. The union and the company could not agree on what should stay open and what should be closed. The union felt all along that all restrooms should remain open. At the present time all restrooms remain open.

Heat Treat / Plating

The plating department cut back 2 operators effective November 10, 2006 and the Heat Treat department cut back 3 lg.16's.

3rd shift eliminated

The company has decided to eliminate 3rd shift with the exception of about 5 jobs. This will affect 30 or 35 members. They also changed the starting times. 1st shift will work 6:30a.m. to 3:00p.m. and 2nd shift will work 3:00pm to 11:30pm. Many of our members are upset with the new hours. Most of the members prefer coming in early and leaving early. This was just another way to agitate our members.

Steward Training

A steward training committee has been established. The steward is the backbone of the union. The intent of the committee is to instruct and educate our stewards. The committee has held 2 training sessions, only some of the stewards were present. (List on page 5.) Please encourage your steward to attend.

Recall from voluntary layoff

If you are out on a voluntary layoff, the company will call you back within six weeks after the Christmas shutdown, seniority permitting. If you wish to remain on voluntary layoff, you should notify the company prior to the Christmas shutdown.

Bereavement

If you have bereavement during the Christmas holiday period, you should call the bereavement in immediately after the holiday period. Do not come to work. If you come to work and punch in you will lose your bereavement leave. To file a claim for payment you should present your documentation to the Timekeeping department.

Merry Christmas

Happy Holiday's to the active and retirees.
Good luck and keep on pushing.

In Solidarity,
Jesse Edwards

Briggs & Stratton First & Third Shift

by Jackie Goodwin & Dan Badzinski

We are receiving a large number of attendance warnings. Some of these attendance warnings could be that the newer members do not understand the attendance/tardy policy. It is a point accumulation system. It is found in your contract book on page 10. Here is the Attendance/Tardy Policy:

- 1) Tardy or leaving early one (1) hour or less=1/3 point.
- 2) Tardy or leaving early more than one (1) hour but four (4) hours or less=2/3 point.
- 3) Each absence/occurrence of more than four (4) hours unless specifically excepted in this article=1 point.
- 4) Failure to notify the company via the ACTT system that an employee is unable to report for work as required=1/3 point.

The number for ACTT call 414-259-5383.

Step 1: An employee who accumulates less than six (6) points will receive no disciplinary action.

Step 2: An employee who accumulates six (6) points or more but less than seven (7) points will receive a first written warning.

Step 3: An employee who accumulates seven (7) points but less than eight (8) points will receive a second written warning.

Step 4: An employee who accumulates eight (8) points or more but less than nine (9) points will receive a third written warning.

Step 5: An employee who accumulates nine (9) points or more will be subject to termination.

If you have any questions regarding the attendance policy, please contact your steward or rep. We would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year.

Membership Information

November 2006

930 Members in Good Standing

652 in Briggs & Stratton Unit

278 in Strattec Unit

November Dues Payments

560 Dues Paying Members at Briggs

254 Dues Paying members at Strattec

814 Total Dues Paying Members

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

Wellness Corner

“You can’t live without it” SAD this time of year? It could be Seasonal Affective Disorder

by Linda Burke, LCSW

As the seasons change and the days become shorter, there can be a tendency for some people in northern climates to be affected by the decrease in exposure to sunlight. Seasonal Affective Disorder, (SAD) most commonly occurs in late fall and can last through the winter and into spring.

While the cause of SAD is not completely understood, it is clearly related to changes in seasonal light. Light affects cycles in the body. And lack of light during the winter months may effect levels of hormones and brain chemicals. This could contribute to the symptoms of SAD. Symptoms often begin during adolescence or young adulthood.

People with SAD experience a number of symptoms such as change of appetite (especially, craving for sweets or carbohydrates), sleep (hypersomnia being especially common), decreased energy, social withdrawal, poor concentration to situational holiday stressors.

People with SAD may benefit from several different treatments or approaches. Some people report that walking outdoors each day is helpful. Another approach is called light therapy. This involves use of full spectrum lighting and can be a great help in reducing the extent of the seasonal mood changes. Use of lighting needs to be adjusted to the specific individuals needs.

If symptoms of depression become prolonged or severe, an assessment with a mental health professional can become necessary. Treatment options may involve counseling or use of antidepressant medications. Some individuals who have a history of bipolar disorder or major depressive disorders can be particularly susceptible to an episode of significant depression as the seasons change and light availability diminishes. For these individuals, follow up with their mental health providers may need to be more frequent during the winter months.

If significant mood changes occur regularly every year as the seasons change, the possibility of Seasonal Affective Disorder is high and Behavioral Health intervention should be considered.

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

LOCAL 2-232 REPORTER

December 2006

Volume 27, Issue #7

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.

Office 8500 W. Capitol Dr.

Phone 414-463-7425 Fax 414-463-7638

e-mail -office@pace7232.org Website- www.pace7232.org

Hours 7:00a.m.- 4:00p.m. Monday through Friday

The information contained herein is of informal nature and is not intended to be final and authoritative.

Editors: Scott Godshaw, Ross Winklbauer, Al Olivares

Officers: President: Scott Godshaw Vice President: Al

Eyseichik, Secretary-Treasurer: Ross Winklbauer Sr

Recording Secretary: Karen Clark, Trustees: Ralph

Schwieger, Vicky Black, Betty Burmester Guide: Debbie

Curro, Sergeant at Arms: Chuck Porter.

Briggs Bargaining Committee: Scott Godshaw, Dan

Badzinski, Jesse Edwards, Jackie Goodwin, Karen

Clark

Strattec Bargaining Committee: Scott Godshaw, Karl

Schneider, Dennis Nowak, Al Olivares