

GMP Horizons

July/August 2011

Serving Workers in the Glass, Metal,

Pottery and Plastics Industries



GMP Educational Conferences

Held Across the US



GMP Scholarship Winners Named

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608 East Baltimore Pike, P.O. Box 607, Media, Pa. 19063
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See Our Website: www.gmpiu.org

Change of Address—Please use above address or email and include the following information:

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- New Address
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- Effective Date

DEATH BENEFIT DUES

In the event you leave employment seeking permanent and total disability, YOU MUST CONTINUE PAYING YOUR DEATH BENEFIT DUES until such time as permanent and total disability status is established. As a general rule, disability determination routinely takes from 6 to 8 months. Please inform our office of such status and any overpayments will be refunded.

Do not permit your DEATH BENEFIT DUES to become delinquent over 90 days. All GMP members are responsible for making payments to maintain death benefit eligibility. All early retirees are responsible for payment to age 65. If you are self-paying, indicate your local union number and forward your check to:

Walter Thorn, GMP Int'l. Secretary-Treasurer
608 E. Baltimore Pike — PO Box 607
Media, PA 19063

Persons wishing to report a death or discuss the death benefit may call the Death Benefit Department at 610-565-5051 ext. 221. Remember to update your beneficiary card as needed. The beneficiary of record is solely entitled to the Death Benefit.

All claims must be filed within five (5) years of death.

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MARK SINGLETON

HECTOR SANCHEZ

DAVID HOFFMAN



BRUCE R. SMITH
International President

*In solidarity, we
MOVE FORWARD
KEEP PUSHING
KEEP FIGHTING*

Thoughts from the Educational Conferences

The 2011 Educational Conferences that just concluded confirmed the strength of our organization. Local union leaders from across the United States participated in numerous training sessions on an array of topics including financial record keeping, Union Privilege, Death Benefit, grievance handling, local union administration, strengthening your local union, organizing and labor law.

I want to thank all the local union leaders who took advantage of this educational opportunity and for their active participation in these conferences. I am extremely proud of our local union leaders for being the courageous, principled and strong leaders that they are. I also congratulate each International Vice President and their staff for the tremendous effort in producing each conference's successful outcome. Last but not least, a shout out to all of our Media headquarters' staff that work so hard behind the scenes in the planning, scheduling and preparations that are essential to make this series of conferences successful.

The GMP is a Union of service and our Officers and staff work very hard on your behalf. We are proud of our record and the many resources that are available to our locals and the membership. The GMP Educational Conferences are an integral part of our commitment to providing our membership with the best possible representation.

The GMP along with other industrial unions face difficult challenges due to the steady erosion of the manufacturing base in the US as corporations relentlessly ship good-paying heavily unionized jobs overseas in exchange for a flood of cheap imports. And lobbyist-written free trade pacts have put our members in direct competition with our impoverished brothers and sisters overseas who lack the basic freedoms and are paid pennies an hour. The GMP and all industrial unions continue to call for a national manufacturing policy that focuses on retaining and creating good paying American jobs and stops rewarding corporations who send work offshore or contract with foreign companies to manufacture what we use to manufacture here.

I view our Union as more than an organization. We are a movement. We are committed to rank and file power, involvement and voice. We are committed to the protection and betterment of all our members and all working families. With the continued support of our local union leadership and our rank and file members in solidarity, we will continue to move forward. So keep pushing, keep fighting, keep mobilizing, keep organizing and keep together.

This Labor Day of September 5, 2011 is a time of reflection. Those of us who belong to the labor movement should set aside some time on this national holiday to consider what organized labor has achieved and what remains to be done. We can be thankful for our good fortunes, but we cannot be complacent. It will take our unified efforts and energy in cooperation with the rest of the labor movement to protect and build upon the many advantages and the many goals set by labor and honored by this Labor Day.

GMP International Union Educational Conferences Across the US

The GMP Area Educational Conferences commenced July 17, 2011 with Area 3 conference in San Diego, California; on July 20th, the Area 2 conference took off in St. Louis, Missouri and the US conferences were completed in Area 1 on July 24, 2011 in Atlantic City. In all, there were 370 delegates from 126 Local Unions in attendance.

The agenda for each conference included presenters from Union Privilege - Venessa Martin spoke to the Area 3 and 2 groups and Keith Ervin addressed the delegates in Area 1. Everyone learned more about the benefits and programs available to members of the GMP Union and there was a very active Q&A session at each conference. For information please visit their website www.unionplus.org.

Delegates were instructed on the GMP Death Benefit program, Local Union Administration practices, Labor Law & current issues in the labor movement, and Bylaw preparation and the amendment process. In addition, local Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service representatives spoke to the groups about their services, including mediation in grievances and contract negotiations as well as the arbitration process for dispute resolution. From FMCS, Area 3 heard from Joseph Mansolillo, Area 2 listened to Richard Kirkpatrick and Area 1 received the presentation from Kevin Savidge, all commissioners from FMCS.

There was specific Financial Secretary training led by Secretary-Treasurer Thorn, CPA Fred Neibauer and Sharon Orlando, Staff Accountant of the GMP Union, covering the handling of local union finances from dues collection and submission to LM filings. Each Area delegation

heard from Director of Organizing Brenda Scotland who talked about organizing from within, getting members involved and keeping them engaged. She also shared some recent organizing successes and the actively ongoing campaigns.

Vice Presidents Ignacio De La Fuente (Area 3), Randy Gould (Area 2) and Don Seal (Area 1) addressed their delegations and provided an overview of Area activities, including membership and local union affilia-

tions, contract negotiations, strikes and plant closures.

International President Smith closed each session with a state of the GMP Union address. (see this month's President's message for more!)

The GMP International Union extends a huge "thank you" to each Area Conference's Registration and PEL Committee for their hard work and efforts in assisting the GMP to get the job done.

Great work brothers and sisters!

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Walter F. Thorn
International Secretary—Treasurer

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Larry Harris

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Pete Jarvis
Kim McNeil
Matthew McCarty

Mark Singleton
Hector Sanchez
David Hoffman



Area 3 San Diego, CA July 17th – 19th, 2011



The Educational Conference for Area 3 had 50 delegates with 15 Local Unions in attendance. The GMP International Union extends a heart felt thank you to all of our members that attended and a special thank you to the below persons for their hard work and efforts in assisting the GMP to get the job done. Great work brothers and sisters.

Area 3

Registration committee

Chairperson Derrick Smith, President, Local Union 50

Area 3 registration committee:

Carlos Costa, Financial Secretary, Local Union 164B

Brian Copeland, President, Local Union 112

Julie Lee, Recording Secretary, Local Union 81

Jesse Ledezma, Vice President, Local Union 19

Carlos Contreras, President, Local Union 17

PEL committee

Chairperson Sherrie Raab, Financial Secretary, Local Union 112.

Area 3 PEL committee:

Lisa Harris, Financial Secretary, Local Union 141

Daniel Trevino, President, Local Union 177

Debra Ligon, Local Union 19

Wanda Marshall, Financial Secretary, Local Union 19





Area 2 St. Louis, MO July 20th – 22nd, 2011

The Educational Conference for Area 2 had 130 delegates with 46 Local Unions in attendance. The GMP International Union extends a heart felt thank you to all of our members that attended and a special thank you to the below persons for their hard work and efforts in assisting the GMP to get the job done. Great work brothers and sisters.

Area 2

Registration committee

Chairperson Wanda Williams, President, Local Union 216.

Registration committee:

Timothy Scott, President, Local Union 65B

Myron Slack, Financial Secretary, Local Union 117

Sherman Bales, President, Local Union 195

Paula Farris, Local Union 216

Edward Dunford, President, Local Union 233

PEL committee

Chairperson Stacey Anderson, President, Local Union 459.

PEL committee:

Kristina Stanton, Financial Secretary, Local Union 48

Sheryl Mailath, Financial Secretary, Local Union 166

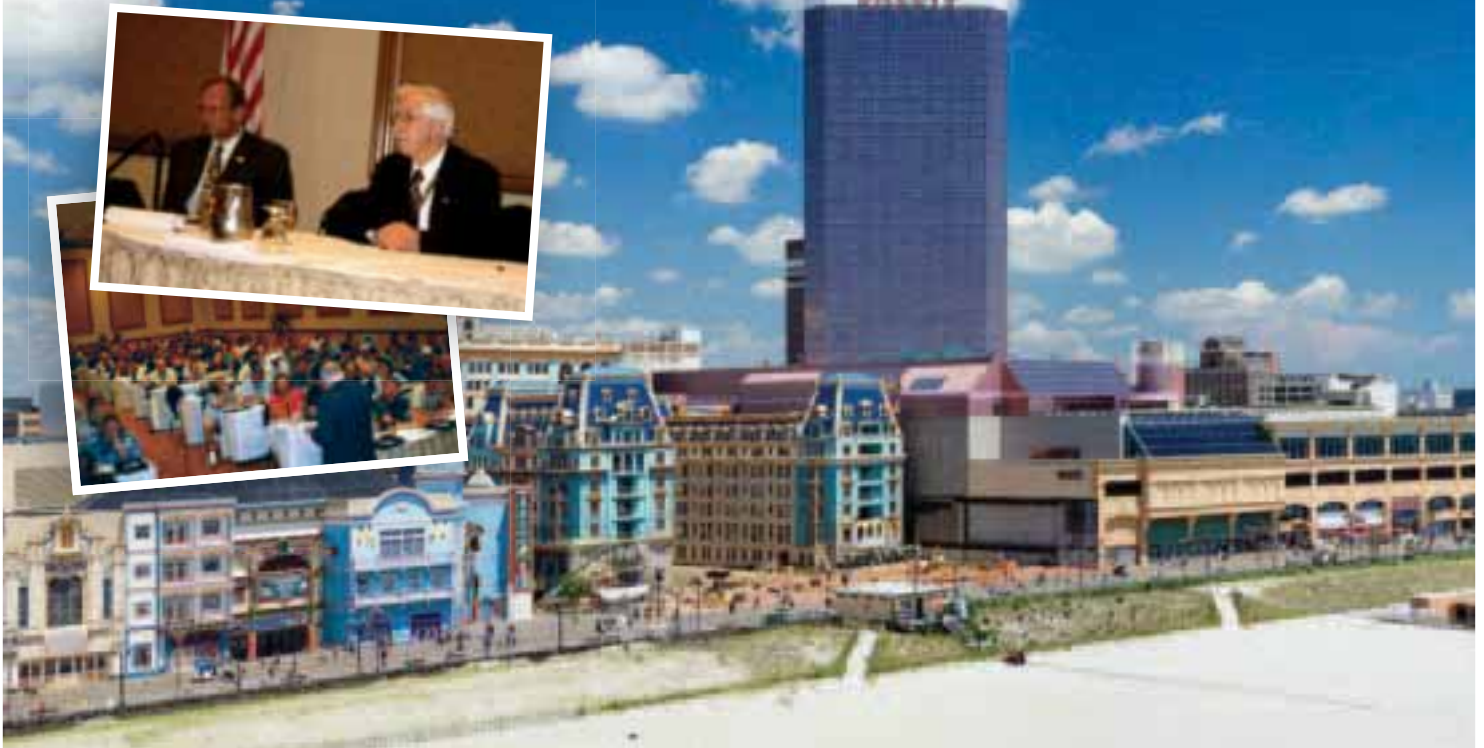
Debra Buggs, Recording Secretary, Local Union 166

Georgia Fort, President, Local Union 359

(Richard) Troy Householder, President, Local Union 372



Area 1 Atlantic City, NJ July 24th – 26th, 2011



The Educational Conference for Area 1 had 190 delegates with 65 Local Unions in attendance. The GMP International Union extends a heart felt thank you to all of our members that attended and a special thank you to the below persons for their hard work and efforts in assisting the GMP to get the job done. Great work brothers and sisters.

Area 1

Registration committee:

Chairperson Dan Swonger, President, Local Union 244

Committee:

- Matthew Hamblen, President, Local Union 32
- Ira Bryan, President, Local Union 45B
- Louis Smith, President, Local Union 77
- Janet Barnhill, President, Local Union 91
- Matthew McFarlin, President, Local Union 236

PEL committee:

Chairperson Tim Stein, President, Local Union 172

PEL committee:

- Bobbi Bockoras, , President, Local Union 54
- Tracy Green, Recording Secretary, Local Union 54
- Lisa Street, Recording Secretary, Local Union 96
- Francis Inzana, Recording Secretary, Local Union 110
- Glynn Fontenot, Jr., Vice President, Local Union 157
- Melanie Antle, Local Union 244
- Sally Winterburn, President, Local Union 417



**More Pictures
Appearing on
Pages 10 & 11**

HATS OFF TO THE WINNERS

GMP Scholarship Winners Announced

The International Union is proud to announce the 2011 scholarship awardees as named by International Secretary-Treasurer Walter F. Thorn. Every member who has contributed to the Scholarship Fund may take great pride in what they have helped to accomplish. The support of the GMP staff and our Local Unions and their members is vital to our Memorial Scholarship Program. This year's recipients are: Laura E. Booher, daughter of Dennis L. Booher, of Local Union #188 in Connellsville, Pennsylvania, Vanessa M. Cagle, daughter of Jeff R. Cagle, of Local Union #17 in Modesto, California, Cassidy B. McDougale, daughter of Terry G. McDougale, of Local Union #65B in Boaz, Alabama, Kyle B. Messer, son of Terry L. Messer, of Local Union #9B in Keokuk, Iowa, Chelsie D. Rimel, daughter of Carl H. Rimel, of Local Union #188 in Connellsville, Pennsylvania, and Jalina N. Sabatose, daughter of William J. Sabatose, of Local Union #28 in Brockway, Pennsylvania.



Laura Booher will attend Grove City College in Grove City, Pennsylvania, where she will major in Spanish Education. During her years of being home schooled she participated in theater productions, piano competitions, ballroom dancing, and TeenPact Leadership Schools. Laura has earned several awards for essay contest, including a second-place award in the Young Artist's Competition. In the community, Laura has volunteered by going on mission trips, participating in church fundraisers, teaching jewelry classes, and directing two plays for elementary school students. When Laura isn't involved in her many activities in the community she enjoys spending time with her family and friends, crocheting, making flower arrangements, making jewelry, baking, and reading.



Vanessa Cagle will attend Corban University in Oregon this coming fall, where she will major in Health Science/Pre-Physical Therapy and play basketball for the Corban Warriors. After receiving her undergraduate degree, Vanessa plans to attend Physical Therapy School and become a physical therapist. Vanessa was Valedictorian of her senior class and graduated with a 4.26 GPA from Modesto Christian High School in Modesto, California. Her achievements include: California Scholarship Federation Life Member, National Honors Society (Jr/Sr), California Interact (Jr/Sr), National Youth Leadership Forum Nominee 2008-2011, and 23 individual high school academic awards. Vanessa was a four-year varsity player and captain of the basketball team for Modesto Christian High School. Vanessa received many basketball honors including the 2011 CIF Sportsmanship Citizenship Honoree Medal, 6 County Senior All Star, All District Girls Basketball, and TVL All League. In the community, Vanessa has volunteered with Head Start preschools, the Salvation Army, community food drives, youth basketball, and at a local physical therapy practice.



Cassidy McDougale will attend Jacksonville State University in Jacksonville, Alabama. Cassidy was a graduate from Albertville High School, while attending Albertville High School she was a member of the national honor society, MU Alpha Theta (a mathematics honor society), and was on the schools honor roll. Cassidy was also involved in Junior Civitans, Future Business Leaders of America, and was on the drum line. Cassidy was lucky enough to march in the Macy's Day Parade in New York City and the Rose Bowl Parade in California while a member of her high school band.



Kyle Messer will attend University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa, where he will major in business management and minor in accounting. Kyle was very active in his high school especially in student council where he was the class president for three years, and class representative for one. Kyle's school activities with student council included volunteering at blood drives, senior citizen dinners, setting up for prom, and giving a speech at graduation. Kyle also participated in basketball and bowling for two years, golf all four years of high school and was inducted into the National Honor society his Junior year. In the community Kyle volunteered with a group called Konnections and received over 200 volunteering hours in the last four years. The role Kyle is the proudest of is he was a Big Brother to a boy in elementary school through Big Brothers Big Sisters.



Chelsie Rimel will attend Penn State University's main campus where she plans to study history and pre-law. Upon graduating from Penn State Chelsie plans to obtain her law degree with hopes to one day become a congressional lobbyist. While attending Mt. Pleasant High School Chelsie was very active and was the Majorette Captain, Mock Trial Captain, National Honor Society President, Quiz Team Co-Captain, Yearbook Editor, and the Gamma Omega Treasure. Graduating high school Chelsie was in the top one percent of her class.



Jalina Sabatose will attend St. Francis University in Loretto, Pennsylvania, where she plans to earn a degree to one day be a Physician Assistant. While attending Brockway High School Jalina was named the Salutatorian of her graduating class and was very active in sports. Jalina earned multiple awards for her performance on the Varsity Basketball, Softball, and Soccer teams to include the Basketball and Soccer GPA award, AML All-Star for Softball and Basketball, Tri-County Honorable Mention for Softball and Basketball, Presidential Physical Fitness Award, and Most Valuable Defensive Player for Soccer. In the class room Jalina was the Treasurer of the National Honor Society, Student Council President, Interact Club Vice President, achieved a Scholastic Award/Honor and Honor Roll for the A+ Team, and participated in the Academically Inclined Minds, Varsity Club, Ski Club, Kaimann's Halloween Parade, Youth Group, and was a teacher for Vacation Bible School and Sunday School. In the community Jalina coached basketball, and volunteered with the American Red Cross, American Cancer Society, Read Across America, and Trash Pick Up.



WARD MANUFACTURING

In 1924, Mr. Joseph Ward founded Ward Manufacturing LLC in Blossburg, Pennsylvania. With approximately thirty employees, the company began producing a small line of cast iron steam and drainage fittings along with cast iron plugs and bushings.

Over the next four years, the demand for Ward products increased



rapidly. In 1928 the manufacturing facilities doubled in size and Class 150 malleable iron fittings were introduced. During the next decade, Ward continued to grow and added a facility to produce malleable iron pipe unions in 1938.

To stay ahead of growing customer preference for competitively priced Ward products, a highly automated foundry was erected in 1955. Through constant maintenance, continued improvement and reinvestment, this facility continues to produce fittings today.

In May, 1980, a series of new Ward products were introduced including: Class 300 brass-to-brass seated unions, beam clamps, C-clamps, Wardlox plain-end fittings, and Couplox grooved end fittings. In 1990 the product line expanded again to include Teelox mechanical branch connectors, meter swivels and ferrules and connecting nuts. Also added was a revolutionary new product called WARDFLEX.

WARDFLEX Corrugated Stainless Steel Tubing for piping of fuel gases was originally introduced into the U.S. in 1986 under the name of SOFLEX. At that time, Hitachi Metals America (Piping Components Division) was actively working on developing SOFLEX product standards with the American Gas Association and the Gas Research Institute.

In 1990, Ward became part of the Hitachi family and was responsible

for promoting the unique SOFLEX technology under a new WARD-FLEX product name. Soon after, the





Pictured are the dedicated and longtime members for over 30 years from GMP Local 304B, at the top is Doug Davies and pictured in the middle is Michael L. Hall.

American Gas Association certified the WARDFLEX system for use throughout the U.S. Since that time, WARDFLEX has gained recognition in the four major model codes in the U.S. and has Code recognition in all 50 states.

In 2006, Ward Manufacturing acquired Wisconsin Nipple and Fitting Corporation of Milwaukee,

Wisconsin. Primarily a manufacturer of carbon welded and seamless pipe nipples for the industrial pipe-valve-fittings (PVF) market, Wisconsin Nipple has earned a reputation as the nipple industry quick-shipper.

In 1997, Ward embarked on yet another exciting change as it opened its' new ACP (Automotive Castings Products) Plant in Lawrenceville, PA. This new state-of-the-art facility was and still focuses solely on producing ductile iron castings for the automotive industry, supplying castings that ultimately end up on vehicles made by Subaru, Honda, Ford, GM, Nissan, Volkswagen, and BMW. This facility has undergone many changes in its young existence. Originally beginning as a subsidiary of Ward Manufacturing, the then ACP Manufacturing eventually split off to become a sister company to Ward under the Hitachi Metals America umbrella.

Most recently, in December of 2007, ACP merged with two machine shops, one located in Wellsboro, PA and the other in Effingham, IL to form a new company called Hitachi Metals Automotive Components USA LLC (HMAC).

During the many years that Ward has operated, the major asset has been its' hard working and dedicated employees. For the majority of this time, these employees have been part of the GMP under the Local 304B. The local officers of 304B are President David M. Crocco, Vice President Steven J. Rudinski and David K. Dorn, Financial-Secretary Rodney R. Ralph, recording Secretary Debra I. Campbell, and Treasurer Claude S. Christman. Due to Wards' longevity and major influence in the community, it is common for two or even three generations of one family to work at Ward or HMAC – Lawrenceville (also covered by the Local #304B). It is also common to find a number of employees who have worked at the facility for thirty, forty or even fifty years.

Ward and HMAC continue to strengthen the economic heart and soul of Tioga County.



Hitachi Metals Automotive Components USA, LLC (HMAC) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Hitachi Metals America. HMAC has three locations, a casting foundry located in Lawrenceville, Pennsylvania where members of GMP Local Union 304B take pride in working. Pictured below are some of the products that are created and produced by HMAC.



GMP International Union Educational Conferences Across the US







Executive Officer Donald "Butch" Carter had the honor of swearing in two members of Local Union 177, in Tracy California in July. Pictured above is (L-R) Jacob Tuggle who is a new member, Executive Officer, Donald "Butch" Carter, Sr., and Donald Carter, Jr. Pictured below is Executive Officer Carter swearing in his son and Local Union 177 newest trustee Donald Carter, Jr.



On May 23rd, 2011 Rick Kelley retired from the A.Y. McDonald Manufacturing Company in Dubuque, IA. Rick has been a member of GMP Local Union 263B for eleven years. Pictured above with Rick is Terry Cotrell (L-R), a fellow employee and friend who had the honor of presenting Rick with a gold GMP watch from the entire membership of Local 263B. Rick has a wife Nancy, two children, and six grandchildren that he plans on spending his retirement with along with enjoying many years of hunting, fishing and traveling.



International President Bruce R. Smith was in attendance at the North East Protective League meeting held in Atlantic City, NJ on June 17th. President Smith addressed the attendees on the importance of their participation in the political arena during this time of constant attacks on organized labor. The President introduced newly appointed Area One Vice President Don Seal. Vice President Seal, as well as members of the Area One Staff, also addressed the group.



SOLIDARITY PAYS

Get discounts, rebates and savings on union made products and services this Labor Day and every day!



- **AT&T: SAVE 15%** on service from the only national wireless provider that is "Proud to Be Union."
- **Goodyear Discounts:** **SAVE up to 10%** on union-made tires and car services.
- **Union-Made Clothing:** **5% DISCOUNT** on jeans, T-shirts, denim shirts, twill shirts and other fine-quality garments.
- **ConsumerReports.org:** **SAVE 25%** on this online service with product reviews and rating compiled by union workers.
- **Entertainment Discounts:** **SAVE** at over 50 theme parks, movie theaters, sporting events and more.
- **Powell's Bookstore: BARGAIN PRICES** on all kinds of new and used books at this unionized online store.

For full details, visit UnionPlus.org



Notice of Nomination and Elections

Local 14, Winchester, IN

The nominations of officers for Local 14 will take place on Wednesday September 7th, 2011 at the regular meeting times of 7:30am and 3:30pm at the Winchester Moose Lodge, located at 190 M 100 E, Winchester, IN 47394.

Elections will take place on Wednesday October 5th, 2011 from 6:00am - 4:00pm at the Winchester Moose Lodge. The results will be given at the afternoon Union meeting following the closing of the polls.

Local 30, Pevely, MO

The nominations of officers for Local 30, Pevely, MO, will take place on September 6th, 2011 at the three Monthly Meetings at 8:30am, 1:30pm and 4:30pm. These nominations will take place at the Local 30 Union Hall which is located at 105 Main Street, Pevely, MO 63070.

Elections will take place at the Union Hall on October 4th, 2011, the polls will open at 6:00am and close at 5:00pm, voting will be open to members during this time except during each meeting.

Local 33, Toano, VA

The nomination of Officers for Local Union 33 Toano, Virginia will take place Monday October 17th, 2011 from 6:00 am - 3:30 pm at the plants guard house.

Local 65, Winchester, IN

The nominations of officers for Local 65 will take place on Tuesday September 6th, 2011 during the regular monthly meeting at 5:00pm at the Moose Lodge in Winchester.

Elections will take place on Tuesday October 4th, 2011 at the Moose Lodge in Winchester from 7:00am - 5:00pm.

Local 117, Lincoln, Illinois

The nomination of officers for Local Union 177, Lincoln, Illinois will take place on September 22nd, 2011 at the monthly meeting at 4:30 pm. These nominations will take place at the American Legion.

The elections will be at the American Legion on October 27th, 2011, the polls will be open from 7:00 am 5:00 pm to all members.

Local 157, Salem, NJ

The nominations of officers for Local 157, Salem, NJ will take place on Tuesday September 6th, 2011 at 3:15pm at the regular monthly meeting. These nominations will take place at the Local 157 Union Hall which is located at 27 Fourth Street, Salem, NJ 08079.

Elections will take place at the Local 157 Union Hall on Friday September 30th, 2011 polls will be open from 6:00am - 5:00pm.

Local 166, Dolton, Illinois

The nominations for Officers of Local Union 166, Dolton, Illinois will be held at the Union Meeting on Tuesday, September 20th, 2011 from 8:30am - 5:00pm. Officers to be nominated are President, AMD Vice President, P & M Vice President, Financial Secretary, Recording Secretary, and Three Trustees. The election of Officers will be held by secret ballot on Tuesday, October 18th, 2011 from 8:30am - 5:00pm. Nominations and Elections will take place at the Baymont Inn & Suites located at 510 East End Avenue, Calumet City, Illinois 60409.



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- **DISCOUNTS UP TO 40% ON MOVIES** at AMC, Regal, Loews, CineMark and other national chains
- **PLUS SPECIAL DEALS** for Broadway shows, museums, aquariums, zoos, movie rentals, sporting events and more

UnionPlus.org/Entertainment

GMP 40 Benefits/Entertainment Ad/4x6-8/2011



Local Union 229, Ligonier, IN

The nominations for officers of Local Union 229, Ligonier, Indiana will be Wednesday, November 16th, 2011 during the regular union meeting. Elections will be held on Wednesday, December 21st, 2011 from 6:00 am - 6:00 pm at the Ligonier Recreation Center located at 520 West Union Street, Ligonier, Indiana.

Local 237, Hazelton, PA

The nominations of officers for Local 237, Hazelton, PA will take place on September 25th, 2011 at 7:30pm during the regular scheduled union meeting to be held at the E.C.U.S. Club, located at 20th and Peace Streets, Hazelton, PA 18201.

Elections will take place on October 23rd, 2011 from 6:30pm - 8:00pm at the E.C.U.S. club.

Local 50, Seattle, WA

The nominations of officers for Local 50, Seattle, Washington will take place on October 12th, 2011 during the regular monthly meeting at 2:30. Elections will take place at the regular meeting on November 9th, 2011, polls will open at 6:00am and close at 3:00pm.

Stewards and the Law

Your steward's tool box is probably already bulging, stuffed with the union contract and grievance forms, local bylaws, dues check-off cards, and notices of meetings, political action campaigns and general good and welfare developments. But there's another compartment that needs attention: the legal structure.

While a steward is most definitely not a lawyer, various laws — state, federal, provincial and local — overlap the union contract, so a steward is often the first contact a member has when there is a question. A steward should not offer detailed advice — a steward once was accused of practicing law without a license! — but should have a general knowledge of a law's coverage and impact, along with a list of contact numbers for the various enforcement agencies.

It is also helpful to have some basic understanding of important laws in case one of them might provide leverage in resolving a problem with a stubborn boss.

The most common laws that stewards deal with have different names and variations in the U.S. and Canada, but generally are much alike:

1 Workers' Compensation. Each state and Canadian province has different laws and coverage but all share the obligation that a workplace injury or illness is the employer's responsibility — so long as the problem happened at work. Most employers, then, try to avoid compensation claims as an unfortunate cost of doing business. A good steward should be alert to any workplace injuries, no matter how small, and make sure that the worker reports the injury to a supervisor and keeps a record of the notice. Too often, a worker will — many times under pressure from a supervisor — get hurt but decide to either keep working or to accept "light duty" in place of filing a workers' comp claim. If the injury worsens, the worker may have forfeited protection and reimbursement under workers' comp for the claim.

In other cases, employer medical personnel are trained to coax information from an injured worker that an injury might — just might — have happened at home, relieving the boss of any financial responsibility. A good steward will make sure the members understand the law and any recent decisions and will make certain that an injured worker notifies the employer's medical office and the steward at the same time.

Many basic claims can be filed with help from the steward and, so long as the employer does not contest the claims, the members can avoid paying a lawyer a piece of the compensation. If it's a complicated case, however, the union office should have a list of supportive compensation lawyers available.

2 Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). With increasing pressure on attendance in the workplace, many employers are willfully ignoring the protection of this U.S. law, which gives a worker unpaid leave up to 12 weeks a year to deal with specific family situations or with the worker's own health. Most important, the time missed cannot be used as a basis for disciplining a worker, so stewards generally become familiar with FMLA while handling a grievance over absenteeism, a glistening example of the overlapping of the law and your union contract.

3 The Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination in the workplace. This is by far the most complicated law for a steward because there is usually language in the union contract that duplicates, or even expands, the language in the act. In many states and Canadian provinces, moreover, there are separate agencies that enforce laws concerning discrimination. The first question for every steward is whether to "grieve" under the union contract or "sue" under the law. The answer can be — both. While every union contract has a clause prohibiting discrimination, the remedies are limited to actual loss while a

law suit — which can last for years and be very expensive — could include additional financial penalties on your employer.

4 The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) imposes on every U.S. employer a "general duty" to provide a safe and healthy workplace, and Canadian law does the same. Every union contract should have a health and safety clause but the steward's main responsibility is to be aggressive about enforcing safe conditions, stepping up if members are either intimidated or unaware about reporting unsafe conditions. Long term health problems — from exposure to chemicals, for example — are another area for a steward to watch, especially since any problems could also be filed as workers' compensation cases.

If all this sounds complicated, with all of the laws, and all of the decisions that change the laws, it is essential that every local regularly sponsor labor law workshops for the stewards. A sharp steward in the U.S. can look at <http://www.dol.gov/compliance/laws/main.htm> for a long list of federal laws, which saves trying to stuff hard copies into the steward's toolbox. In Canada, stewards should check out <http://www.collections.canada.gc.ca/caninfo/ep034.htm>.

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