

Editor: Frank Cline

Local 207L

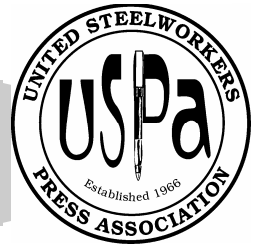
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STEEL



COBRA



April 2004

Volume 18, Issue 1



Sub-District Four

Women of Steel from District 1 meet at Local 207L and take tour of the Findlay Plant. Details on Page 3.





STEEL



COBRA



Volume 1, Issue 1

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Financial Secretary **Rick Maag**

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Ron Coldren
Ron Rettig

Guide **Terry McBeath**
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April 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 <i>Union Meeting</i>	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

**Next Union Meeting
April 12, 2004**

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(l-r, standing) trustee **Jim Blake**, trustee **Jeff McDaniel**, trustee **Greg Jacobs**, executive board member **Bob Brumbaugh**, executive board member **Ron Coldren**, executive board member **Ron Rettig**, guard **Tim Smith**, guide **Terry McBeath** and guard **Todd Best**; (seated) treasurer **Billy Nelson, Jr.**, secretary **Dennis Dukes**, president **Frank Cline**, vice president **Rod Nelson** and financial secretary **Rick Maag**.

Women of Steel

Since our last report we have had two meetings within our District's realm, which is Sub-District 4. The first meeting was right here in our own back yard, the Local 207L Union Hall, and entailed a great tour through the Findlay Plant. The Women of Steel would like to thank Bruce Marshall and Dan Radebaugh for conducting such an interesting and informative tour. They would also like to thank the management of Cooper Tire for extending the invitation to them by way of their "Steelworker" status.

The women had quite a few positive remarks afterwards and were amazed at how "busy everyone was" and the "cleanliness of the facility". The second meeting was held in Woodville, Ohio which included a tour of the Martin Marietta limestone plant.

On behalf of the Women of Steel, I would like everyone to know that, through the order of the monthly meeting, we are asking the Local to donate and/or purchase certain items that are usually requested by our troops overseas and send them a "care package" containing these items. Each delegate to the District WOS is going to do this for their workers who are serving our nation abroad. Currently we have two mem-

bers serving in the Armed Forces overseas; Glenn Brooks and Greg Jacobs. Below you will find their address information, so lets all send them a card or letter to boost their spirits and show them our gratitude. Thank you for your support and solidarity.



Christina De La Rosa
WOS Coordinator



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A Letter From One of Our Boys, Over There

Hello Everyone,

I'm hoping this finds everyone in good health and enjoying nice weather. Missions are going well one day up and one day back. Then one day for maintenance on the vehicles and TOC duty. TOC is an acronym for Tactical Operations Center. This is where we man the radios and MTS systems.

There is another acronym, the army is full of 'em. Along with sometimes full of other stuff if you know what I mean. But I guess MTS is or stands for Mobile Tracking System. Each vehicle has a small computer in it. It is smaller than a laptop and is linked to a GPS or Global Positioning System and we can send messages from the vehicles to the TOC and visa versa. It took me a while to catch on but I got it pretty much down.

We are taking over some equipment from a National Guard unit from New Mexico and boy are their vehicles in poor shape. We had our HUMMMV in the shop the other day changing all the fluids and filters. What junk the coolant looked like ice tea, I swear I couldn't get over it. The oil was real thin and it wasn't even warm. Those poor trucks hadn't seen any TLC in a long time. There's an acronym everyone should know.

Here is some news from the home front my son Billy is going to attend Marshall University in the fall at their school of fine arts. He went down to audition a few weeks ago for their voice program. He must have done an awesome job because he got a 75% scholarship from the university. He told me and I about started to cry on the phone I'm so proud of him. I feel bad because I'm not at home to witness it first-hand but I have an awesome wife who will tape everything for me. I do not know where he got his singing ability but it wasn't from me. I don't sing unless I'm in a car with the windows up and the radio turned up fairly loud.

When we went down to the open house the second weekend of December for the open house the University representative told us it would be or is pretty rare for a freshman to get 75%. So as you can see the kid is talented I know he got his good looks from me yours truly.

Hey I'm goanna go for now please everyone take care of yourselves and each other. I'll e-mail everyone of you soon. Remember everyone we are doing good work over here the people here need it. Did any of you know that before Saddam Hussein the people of Iraq had the worlds highest literacy rate? My father told me that about 2-3 weeks ago.



See everyone soon
SFC Glenn W. Brooks Jr.



Health & Safety

Near Miss Reports

The Safety Committee is encouraging employees to fill out a “Near Miss Accident” report whenever an incident occurs which might have resulted in accident or injury. While no one can predict the future and the basis for filing a report may be somewhat subjective, employees generally realize when they have had a “**Close Call**”. A Near Miss is an opportunity, a second chance to correct deficiencies that may exist in procedures, or to highlight dangerous conditions or activities. Many employees are reluctant to file Near Miss Reports out of fear of reprimand. The intent of reviewing Near Miss Accident Reports is not for disciplinary purposes, but for correcting situations before they result in accidents and injuries. A Near Miss Report can be used for any work activity within the plant. These forms are available “on-line” for printing or through your supervisor. Please contact a member of the Union/Company Safety Committee for further assistance with problems or questions.



practices for workers who anticipate working with human blood or bodily fluids. The following sections are excerpts of Cooper’s Plan:

Identification of At-Risk Job Classification

All employees who have been designated as first aid providers and would be expected to provide first aid treatment in the event an employee is injured at work.

All members of mill rescue teams.

Engineering and Work Practice Controls

PPE must be available, easily accessible and used by all at-risk employees.

Employees must handle situations in a manner that minimizes exposure risks.

Employees must decontaminate the affected area and themselves after an exposure incident.

Bio-Hazard containers have been provided in the plant for the disposal of “needles and sharps”.

SAFETY TALK

Safely Handling Bloodborne Pathogens

OSHA issued “Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens” to protect workers from anticipated exposures to bloodborne pathogens that include human bodily fluids potentially contaminated with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), the hepatitis B virus (HBV), or other bloodborne pathogens. (Bloodborne Pathogens are generally defined as pathogenic micro-organisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans.) Cooper Tire has a written Exposure Control Plan, which outlines strategies and specific safe work



Health & Safety Continued....

Personal Protective Equipment

PPE should be selected based on the anticipated exposure, it will be considered appropriate only if it prohibits potentially infectious materials from contacting the skin

Contaminated articles should be disposed of in bio-hazard containers.

Reporting

All exposure incidents must be reported to management before the end of the shift on which the incident occurs.

In the event an at-risk employee renders first aid treatment or assists with rescue where an exposure incident occurs, that employee must be offered a confidential medical examination and the opportunity to obtain hepatitis B vaccine as soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours later.

Decontamination

Individual-Wash with anti-bacterial soap.

Area-Restrict access to the area. Wear 2 pairs of single use medical-type latex or vinyl gloves. Housekeeping or custodial personnel should wear industrial-type latex-rubber or nitrile-rubber gloves while cleaning restrooms or other areas with blood or potentially infectious fluids.

Use Zee Medical clean up kits or an equivalent to pick-up and dispose of any large amounts of blood.

If the waste to be disposed of is less than 50 pounds; it may be disposed of in the same manner as other non-regulated solid waste. This includes non-liquid waste such as bandages or absorbent.

Clean the affected area with ten parts water to one part bleach or a commercially available disinfectant.

After cleaning, promptly disinfect mops and

any other cleaning equipment.

Training

All at-risk employees must annually receive training that includes the following: an explanation of modes of transmission and how to reduce exposure instruction on types, proper use, location, removal, handling, decontamination, and disposal of personal protective equipment information on Hepatitis B vaccine and on the procedures to follow if an exposure incident occurs.

All at-risk employees will be advised of Cooper Tires Exposure Control Plan and its contents as well as with the OSHA Blood-borne Pathogens Standard (1910.1030). The ECP and OSHA standard shall be made accessible to all employees

Record Keeping

Exposure incident records must be maintained for 30 years. Training records shall include:

1. Date of training
2. Contents of training sessions
3. Name & signature of trainer
4. Attendance sign in sheet
5. An annual review of each exposure incident must be conducted

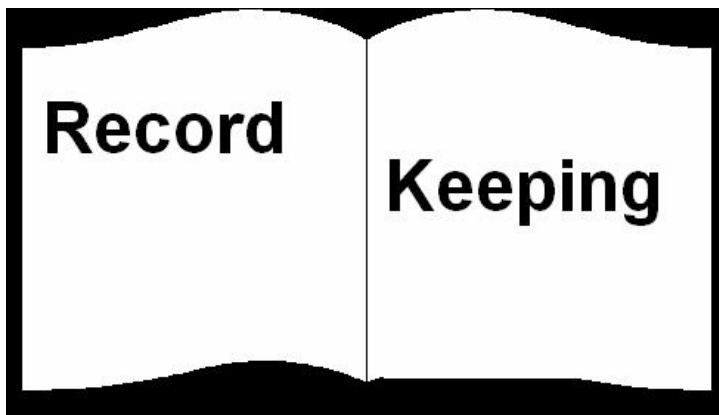
Recently we were informed that the Hazmat team was being disbanded. The **Hazmat Team** has been routinely used in the past to clean-up fluids after accidents. This will no longer be the case. Unless you have been designated as an at-risk employee and have received annual training you should not attempt clean-up.

“Safety First”

Local Union Safety Committee

Dan Radebaugh

Bruce Marshall



New Cooper Employees



New Hires as of 3/9/04 are from left to right: Jennifer Hackworth, Anthony Rosselit, Jason Wilkerson, David Gallegos, Aaron Donaldson, and Greg Bailey.

The members of the United Steelworkers of America Local 207L welcome all of you.



New Hires as of 3/23/04 are from left to right: Scott Johns, Dan Wadding, Jeff Niese, and Gary Niese, (Jeff and Gary are not related).

***** E-POLITICS ACTION ALERT *****

Federal Election Commission Proposes New Rules to Shut Down Unions and Other Groups Critical of Bush

On March 4 the Federal Election Commission ("FEC") issued proposed new regulations that would effectively shut down CWA's ability to communicate with the public on any issue that is critical of President Bush. The rules would apply to all unions and other groups. We urge you to speak out today against these rules.

The FEC's proposed rules would also shut down most efforts--including even nonpartisan programs--to register and turn out union and progressive voters.

The rules are being pushed by the Republican National Committee to silence the voices of working families.

Here's the issue:

The FEC is now proposing to redefine and broaden the scope of a "political committee" to include, for example, any union that spends more than \$1,000 in 2004 on federal political contributions, voter registration, get-out-the-vote or other voter mobilization activity, or on any public communication that expresses an opinion on an issue, even if it deals with a member of Congress only as an elected federal official.

The FEC has identified other thresholds of public advocacy that would redefine our entire union as a "political committee" which would make these activities fall under McCain-Feingold restric-

tions.

In other words, if we take out an ad urging our members to contact a member of Congress on any issue, that ad would have to be paid from voluntary COPE dollars instead of general funds.

In fact, any lobbying we do in Congress would have to be paid for out of voluntary dollars.

If we say anything in our press releases, materials, website, etc., that identifies a federal office holder with an issue, we may have to use voluntary dollars to pay for the communication.

The rationale behind these proposed rules defies logic and is a direct threat to our First Amendment rights.

The FEC will hold a public hearing on April 14 and 15. We need you to submit your opposition to these rules to the FEC no later than April 9.

The FEC plans to make its final decision on these proposed rules by mid-May, and they could go into effect as early as July, right as we enter the crucial 100 final days of the 2004 election campaign.

UNION MEMBERS MUST TAKE ACTION NOW!

1. Protest these rules to the FEC. E-mail comments to the FEC at politicalcommittees-tatus@fec.gov <<mailto:politicalcommitteestatus@fec.gov>> by April 9 or write the FEC by faxing (202-219-3923) or mailing them to Mai T. Dinh, Acting Assistant General Counsel, at Federal Election Commission, 999 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20463. Comments can be brief; the volume of comments is more important.

2. Contact Your Members of Congress - Urge them to sign on to letters to the FEC opposing any new FEC rulemaking for all the above reasons. If your Members voted for the McCain-Feingold law,



***** E-POLITICS ACTION ALERT *****Continued....

remind them that the House and Senate Democratic leadership has said publicly that the law doesn't authorize these FEC proposals and these proposals do not advance campaign finance reform. Fax or email your Members, or call them through the congressional switchboard, 202-244-3121.

3. Write a letter to the editor or an op-ed piece - Help raise public opposition to this proposal; make some of the points outlined above.

Here are some talking points:

* It's outrageous that the FEC would try to outlaw groups from speaking out about the policies and records of President Bush and other officeholders who are federal candidates, especially in the middle of an election year.

* These rules would shut down the legitimate activities of unions and other nonprofit organizations.

* Unions in particular have a long history of speaking out about public issues and officeholders, registering voters and boosting civic participation. Union members support these activities but this proposed rule could arbitrarily force unions to sharply reduce or forgo them.

* Obviously, it would be impossible for unions to become federal PACs-register and report to the FEC, accept contributions only from individuals and other federal PACs, accept no contribution more than \$5,000, etc.

* Nothing in the McCain-Feingold law or the Supreme Court's decision upholding it empowers the FEC to adopt these rules. That law is only about banning federal candidates from using unregulated contributions ("soft money"), and banning political parties

from doing so, because parties sponsor those candidates.

* It's clear that-with one exception relating to running broadcast ads mentioning candidates close to an election-the new law wasn't supposed to interfere with the advocacy and activities of independent nonprofit groups-including unions that have never been subject to such intrusive regulation by the FEC.

* The FEC can't fix the problems with these proposed rules just by imposing new burdens on non-federal section 527 groups. They do important issue education, public advocacy and voter mobilization. Many of them are sponsored by unions and other groups. In 2000, Congress enacted a public disclosure law that required 527's to fully report their finances to the IRS, but Congress did not restrict their independent speech and activities. Nor did Congress do so in the McCain-Feingold law in 2002. The FEC has no authority to go further now.

* If the FEC does decide to issue any new regulations, it would be extremely disruptive and unfair to apply them to the 2004 election. Unions and other groups have relied on the current rules and undertaken significant commitments; they would need time to adjust to the new rules. That's how the McCain-Feingold law itself was implemented--it was enacted in March 2002 but went into effect after the November 2002 election.

Visit the web address below to tell your friends about this.

www.cwa-cope.org



USWA Cooper Council

Council meets in Pittsburgh

On Monday, March 16th, USWA Officers representing eight Local Unions convened in Pittsburgh to discuss the restructuring of the USWA Cooper Council. In attendance at this meeting representing their Locals were the following; Frank Cline and Rod Nelson-207L, Mike Allen-556L, Ernie Leach and Ronnie Dobson-634L, Kathy Blanton and Devine Taylor-735, James McPherson-752L, Dave Buser-1042L, Aaron Patterson and Dan McKinnis-1152L, and Charlie Buggs-769L. Also in attendance at this meeting were John Sellers, R/PIC Executive VP, District Directors Dave McCall, Terry Bonds and Staff Representatives of each respective District.

Many issues concerning the direction in which the Company is heading and its current relationship with the USWA Union represented facilities were discussed at great length. Many changes have taken place within the management system since the purchase of the Standard, Siebe, Avon and Oliver Companies. Although some of these changes have been positive towards the viability of the

Company, some are also having adverse effects on the Union plants.

Willful and blatant violations of our contracts and the company's strategy of "picking us off one at a time" during contract negotiations, along with the steps they have taken towards retiree health care, have alerted the union to the dangers we may face if we continue to remain as "stand alone" Locals within this corporation. The council unanimously agreed that; "if we are to survive in the future as a viable representative of our members, and to obtain certain goals that will ensure that viability, we need to unite as a council and create an impenetrable wall of solidarity within all of the Cooper USWA locals".

After many issues were discussed, the council wrote and adopted a resolution to be read out and voted on within each Local in order to preserve our rights as bargaining unit members and to strengthen our solidarity through a collective partnership with each USWA Cooper Local.

USWA Cooper Council Resolution

Whereas, The changes of corporate structure of the Cooper Tire & Rubber Company have been imminent and obvious for the last several years, and

Whereas, Cooper has become a multinational company and abandoned its core principles, and

Whereas, Cooper has changed in its ideals and principles throughout its management system, and

Whereas, Cooper has publicly proclaimed it has no responsibility for retired workers, and

Whereas, Cooper has stated that Unions are no longer a necessity within its operation in North America, and

Whereas, Labor History shows that strength and unity are gained by workers who bargain collectively;

Therefore be it resolved, that the USWA Local Unions representing Cooper workers in North America form a Council, and

Be it further resolved, that all Local Unions are committed to obtaining common expiration dates and a common master agreement.

The Seattle Times

Watch out when workers discover they're chumps

Someday, the working lugs of America are going to figure out who is paying for all these tax cuts. Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan recently offered a hint when he urged Congress to scale back Social Security benefits.

For two decades, politicians have been shifting the tax burden from high-income taxpayers to the sweating masses. Lunch-pail Americans represent easy pickings, since their taxes get automatically plucked out of weekly paychecks. And the tax for Social Security has proven to be an especially fat goose.

Congress has developed a bad habit: Whenever red ink threatens the federal budget, Social Security is the first place it looks for money. Raising the retirement age for benefits and slowing cost-of-living increases might make sense at some point. But everyone knows this infuriating discussion is about preserving tax breaks for the rich.

Social Security is the working stiff's tax. Three out of four households now pay more in Social Security taxes than in income tax. The Social Security tax takes 6.2 cents out of every dollar of salary, up to a maximum \$87,000. As a result, the tycoon making \$10 million pays the same amount to Social Security as the shopkeeper earning \$87,000.

For a full account of the working chump's growing role as America's star taxpayer, consult a new book titled, "Perfectly Legal: The covert

campaign to rig our tax system to benefit the super rich — and cheat everyone else." Readers should take their blood-pressure pills before letting author David Cay Johnston, a New York Times reporter, show them the various cons.



For example, politicians weep violently over the alleged unfairness of taxing stock dividends. That's double taxation, they exclaim. But, as Johnston points out, Social Security taxes apply to wages that have already been subject to the personal income tax. Nobody cries over that.

And here is the really big rip-off: Social Security is supposed to be a pay-as-you-go program.

That is, today's workers pay

for today's retirees. But from 1984 to 2002, workers paid \$1.7 trillion more than was required to meet current needs. That \$1.7 trillion surplus disappeared into government coffers, thus taking pressure off the income tax.

Why have workers been overpaying for Social Security? Look no farther than Ronald Reagan's tax cuts of 20 years ago. The loss of tax revenues helped double the 1982 federal budget deficit in one year. Alarmed by the surging tide of federal debt, the Reagan administration scouted around for new sources of income.

At the time, Social Security was facing a modest deficit that could have been fixed with minor adjustments. But the Reaganites, aided by the dumb Democrats then running Congress, declared a crisis and rang the alarms. They pushed through big increases in Social Security taxes and raised the future retirement age. They said that collecting more Social Security taxes than currently needed would "build up a surplus" for

The Seattle Times Continued.....

the baby boomers' retirement.

The late Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the not-at-all-dumb New York Democrat, saw the trick for what it was. He called the Social Security tax increase "thievery."

The federal government goes through the motions of issuing IOUs to cover the overpayments. Economists have called those securities "worthless pieces of paper." And three years ago, then-Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill dismissed them as "someone else's promise."

During the last presidential campaign, Democrat Al Gore supported the idea of a Social Security "lockbox": All Social Security tax money not going to current retirees would be used to pay down the national debt. That would leave the nation in better financial shape to pay benefits to the baby boomers.

Republican candidate George W. Bush said: Me too. "In my economic plan," he pledged, "more than \$2 trillion of the federal surplus is locked away for Social Security."

The surplus is, of course, gone, and Bush's tax cuts are helping to pile up more debt, not reduce it. And while the president swings the tax-cutting saber with abandon, the blade never comes anywhere near the Social Security tax.

So we now have Greenspan saying that the nation can't afford the Social Security benefits for which workers have paid extra taxes since 1983. Someday, the lugs will "get it." And when that light finally goes on, they won't be amused.

Providence Journal columnist From a Harrop's column appears regularly on editorial pages of The Times. Her e-mail address is fharrop@projo.com

Rapid Response

The Rapid Response committee would like to thank everyone who signed the petition requesting George Bush and the Department of Labor not to implement new provisions in the nation's Fair Labor Standards act that would do away with over time pay for over 8 million Americans. We collected over 500 signatures that were added to the 550,000 electronic and paper petitions already collected. As we have said that this does not effect us for now, but we needed to do our part to protect over time pay for everybody. Watch the newspapers and the evening news shows for more information on this topic.

Rapid Response Committee

Retirees

Sorry no pictures are available

Dana Huff

Hired in 11/18/66
Retired 2/23/04
2nd stage radial builder.

Armondo Gonzales

Hired in 1/30/67
Retired 4/1/04
Stock servicer.

Dale Nicholson

Hired in 9/13/68
Retired 4/1/04
1st stage radial builder

**Congratulations
to Dana,
Armondo and
Dale and may
they have a very
long and happy
Retirement.**

Local 207L

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Findlay, Ohio 45840

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