



STEEL COBRA



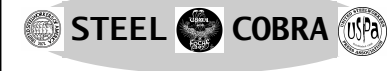
Local 207L Welcomes New Employees



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October 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 <i>Union Meeting</i>	12 <i>Columbus Day (Traditional)</i>	13	14	15	16 <i>National Bass Day</i>
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 <i>Halloween Daylight saving time ends</i>						



Volume 1, Issue 1

Local Union No. 207L
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Officers

President: Frank Cline
Vice President: Rod Nelson
Secretary: Dennis Dukes
Treasurer: Billy Nelson, Jr.

Financial Secretary: Rick Maag

Executive Board Members

Bob Brumbaugh
Ron Coldren
Ron Rettig

Guide: Terry McBeath
Guard: Tim Smith
Guard: Todd Best

International Officers

President: **Leo W. Gerard**

Vice President (Administration): **Andrew V. Palm**

Secretary—Treasurer: **James D. English**

Vice President (Human Affairs): **Leon Lynch**



(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**.

New Employees



Left to right: Lawayne Ashburn, Aaron Fisher and Jeremy Kauble.



Duane Thomas



Rick Wank



Victoria Berry



Left to right: Kenneth Worline, Ed Eddington and Bob Burns.



Left to right: Henry Reffit, Roger Schroeder, William Gay and Daryl Schwochow.

New Employees



Left to right: Dave Baker, Chuck Baker, Kip Apple And Rich Curry.



Left to right: Brad Vera, Gary Clark, Michael Mathes and Mark Dairy.

Political Action Committee

I would like to take this opportunity to inform the membership on the progress of the ongoing “Take Back Ohio” campaign. The AFL-CIO, USWA, and Local 207L started this campaign February 2004 in Columbus, Ohio during a seminar attended by Tim Smith and myself. During this time, with the recommendation of our Local President, the International chose one of our members, Sylvia Ruiz, to work full-time on this project in the capacity of a Zone Coordinator. Tim and I also attended a three day training and Political Conference at Kenyan College to prepare for this project.

Starting in August, Labor-to-Labor walks were coordinated and put into action as volunteers hit the streets of Allen County going door to door informing union members of the issues concerning this year’s elections. At the same time a “flier” blitz was also started not only in our plant, but throughout Ohio and the United States. Our thanks to all who supported this effort of getting 6000 informational fliers to our members.

On September 2nd, as George W. Bush accepted the GOP nomination, 15,000 volunteers went out door to door again, informing union households of the key issues in this election and to get an idea as to which direction our members were leaning towards. The percentage was favorably high, as more than 90% of union workers favored the Kerry/Edwards team. Among those volunteers were our members, their wives, and some even had their sons and daughters along. Four days later, during the Toledo Labor Day Parade, 12,000 union members

marched in support and recognition of all laborers. Once again, members of our Local and their families participated in this event.

The week of the 13th of this month, members of the Rapid Response Committee held a voter registration/Harley Giveaway drive at the plant entrance. Members who were already registered had the opportunity to sign up for a free chance for a new Harley-Davidson as well as those who were newly registered on those two days. Once again, the 20th had union members from Hancock County, including our volunteer members, and volunteers from USWA District 7 (Indiana, Illinois) who took vacation days, going door to door in Findlay and the surrounding area, registering and educating union members.

There are 39 days left until Election Day and we will continue to do our part in changing America into a better place to live. Thanks to all the volunteers that have assisted in this project to date, and if you would like to help out, contact me on 1st shift in the Finishing department. Remember, only with your vote can we expect change.

In Solidarity,

George Shafer, Political Coordinator of 207L

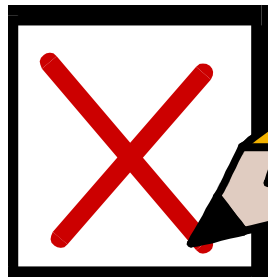
The Steel Cobra's View

You Have a Voice, It's Called a Vote

Has anyone been on the Cooper website lately? They have a link on "Government Affairs" that "will help you make decisions in voting this year." It's amazing to see what their top priorities are. Is this Cooper's (meaning all of us), or is this corporate managements political agenda? You decide. What caught my eye though, were the politicians voting records, specifically Congressman Mike Oxley's. Wow, what a pretty picture the webmaster painted on that one. Read on Sisters and Brothers, unless you're a millionaire or own a "substantial" amount of stock in this or any other place. If you're a hard working stiff, whether at a desk or on the floor sorting tires, here's the real scoop on Oxley's Congressional voting record. (You can check this out at afl-cio.org). Oxley's real voting record for 2003, according to statistics published by the AFL-CIO, he voted 93% of the time for Big Business and 7% of the time for us working folks. Hmmm, no wonder Ohio CEO's like him. His lifetime voting record is 92% for Big Business and/or special interest groups and 8% for us hardworking citizens. Here are a few of the important resolutions that he voted for that directly impacted every one of us negatively in 2003.

The 2004 House budget resolution:

this was designed to reflect Bush's "priorities", which cut over \$500 billion in U.S. programs so that they could give a \$ 726 billion tax cut aimed mostly for the wealthy, including \$364 billion for corporate dividend tax cuts. This budget resolution also cut funding for education, job training, health care programs, Medicaid, pension benefits for federal employees, and veterans' benefits! What a deal.



Worker Safety: Over many years, federal rules have limited the amount of allowable levels of respirable dust in mines and factories to protect the health of workers. Well, Oxley voted on the current administrations proposal to **increase those allowable levels by 400%!** Who needs to breathe clean air while they work anyway?

Overtime Pay: We all know this one. Apparently Oxley, Bush and the rest of the YES voters in Congress think we work overtime for the fun of it. **This bill gave the right to employers to give**

you compensatory time-off instead of pay.

Excuse me Mr. Mortgage collector; I did make my house payment! Yessir, your "day off" is in the mail! If I work overtime, it's about the money Mr. Oxley.

Medicare Prescription Drugs:

The final draft of this bill moved Medicare closer to privatization, steered our mothers, fathers, grandparents, and the rest of our seniors to private HMO's (costly), forced 32.5 million beneficiaries to pay **higher** premiums and other costs, opened the doors to \$139 billion in **profits** for drug companies (atta boy Mike), prevented the government from negotiating lower drug prices, did **absolutely nothing** to rein soaring drug costs for our seniors, and **threatened** the employer-provided drug coverage for millions of retirees.

Mike Oxley is the epitome of Corporate Greed and Wall Street. In 2003 he voted 15 times for business and once for us on key issues. We're voting for the other guy!

What actually is a Billion?

When it comes to things like deficits, costs, taxes, war expenditures, and other monetary issues, we read and hear the word “billion” quite often. Have you ever stopped and thought about how much “one billion” really is? This might give you an idea on the vastness of “one billion.”



- * 1 Billion seconds ago was the year 1972.
- * 1 Billion minutes ago Jesus walked the earth.
- * 1 Billion hours ago men lived in caves.
- * 1 Billion one dollar bills stacked would stand over 300,000 feet high, or 57 miles.
- * If you could count non-stop, at 1 number per second, it would take you 31 years, 251 days, 7 hours, 46 minutes, and 39 seconds to count to 1 billion.
- * If you saved \$1000 a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year, it would take 2,737 years, 10 months, and 7 days to save 1 billion dollars.

The Bush administration, who by the way stated they were going to reduce Government spending, has already spent nearly \$166 billion on the war, and the counter is still running.

- * If you stacked those dollar bills up, it would be 55,333,200 ft. tall or 10,500 miles high. That's 1.68 times the distance between Washington, DC and Iraq.
- * If you divided that \$166 billion up, you could give every man, woman, and child in the U.S. \$568, or every man, woman, and child in Iraq \$3,269.

For more fun stuff and information on George's spending spree (your tax dollars) visit: www.crunchweb.net/87billion and costofwar.com

Rebuttable presumption law takes effect Oct. 13

On July 14, 2004, Governor Bob Taft signed Substitute House Bill 223 (HB 223), the rebuttable presumption law, which is designed to curb substance abuse in the workplace. Under the law, which becomes effective Oct. 13, 2004, employers can seek disallowance of a workers' compensation claim filed by an employee who tests positive on a substance test following a work-related injury.

Simply put, if a worker tests positive or refuses the test, the burden of proof shifts to the employee to prove the presence of alcohol or drugs was not the proximate cause of the work-related injury.

As part of the legislation, BWC is providing all employers with a written notice that must be posted. This notice is on the bottom part of the employer's certificate of coverage and must be conspicuously posted to ensure employees are aware of the implications.

The notice informs employees they may not be eligible for workers' compensation benefits if they are injured while under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance not prescribed by the employee's physician. Employers who wish to contest a work-related injury claim must post this notice for employees; failure to do so may result in a company forfeiting its rights to protection under HB 223.

This law may be applied only to claims for dates of injury no earlier than Oct. 13, 2004, and following the employer's posting of a written notice along with the company's certificate of coverage.

A Message From The President

Dear Sisters and Brothers of Local 207L,

These next few weeks, especially here in Ohio, the campaign process of both parties will accelerate to a level that most of us will feel as being intolerable. To date, as I and many others have volunteered to “get out the Vote” in our designated zones, the majority of union members in our area are in support of the Kerry/Edwards team and their plans for a better America. However, comments of late do seem to reflect our tiredness of the constant rhetoric from both parties.

It’s understandable and I share your concern, but I also know that the outcome of this year’s election is so critical to us as manufacturing workers; we cannot afford to be complacent. Although we have an extremely high number of registered voters in our local, there are still some of us who are not registered to vote or are not planning to vote at all. You cannot afford to be on the sidelines on this election. This election is not about democrats, republicans, or independents. This election is not about guns, abortion, environmental issues, stem cell research or any other personal agendas. It’s about jobs, your jobs.

If you are sitting there right now and thinking to yourself; “I won’t lose my job, we’re doing okay,” you are sadly mistaken. We have job protection, contractually only until October 2008, unless this Company files bankruptcy, and then there isn’t any protection from that. If you really believe that you’re safe, ask one of the new hires, especially the hard working people who came from American Standard. We have members in the plant from Phillips, ask them about job guarantee. Call up some people from Intercel or Findlay Industries, ask them about guaranteed employment.

The old saying goes, “figures don’t lie, liars only figure.” When it comes to the economics of this State and of this Nation, your Union has printed out and used information from one source only, that source being The United States Department of Labor. Those reports do not reflect a growing economy, only a weakening one. Those numbers do not reflect an increase in jobs, only a rapidly growing loss of jobs. Those numbers do not reflect a surplus in the National Budget, as we had 4 years ago, only a deficit which surpassed the one this country had during the ‘Great Depression’. Those numbers also reflect part of a National Debt being owed to China! This administration has actually borrowed money from government controlled banks in a communist country, a country that controls the value of its own currency, and has tried to pass legislation barring the printing of any further information from the Labor Department. Why?

Those figures will also show that money has been spent from the Social Security system, a system that was also left with a surplus of monies 4 years ago, and is now in dire jeopardy. The numbers will also show an alarming number of people not only losing their retirement and health care benefits, but astronomical increases in premiums for those that are fortunate enough to have coverage. The numbers will also show, unfortunately, that the majority of those job losses have been good paying UNION jobs!

The bottom line is, and the reality of it all is, when I lose my job I will no longer be able to send my NRA, UCOA, or MUCC dues in. I won’t be able to send money to the United Way, the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association, the Arbor Day Foundation or the many others that I have contributed to over the years. I won’t even be able to spare the money to buy the magazines, cookies and candy bars that my daughter sells for school and Girl Scouts. Our lives are based around a strong healthy economy that will support good paying jobs, and without those jobs, this system will crumble.

I have nothing to gain by writing this letter to all of you, only everything to lose, it’s called ‘political suicide’. When I fall asleep at night, I have no regrets of that day; I am comfortable knowing that I have done everything to my abilities to represent you. Unfortunately, because of the Labor Laws and other legislation that this administration has bestowed upon us, and to be fair, the “unfair and ridiculous” trade laws that the previous administration had put into place during their tenure, has made my and all union representation abilities much more difficult. The current administration has publicly stated that they believe there is no need in this century for unions. Your CEO has even made comments reflecting Capitol rhetoric in his own “Talk with Tom” meetings on this issue. That in itself is a direct and preemptive economic attack on you and your families. We all have a choice next month; it’s ours and ours alone. We can either sit back and do nothing, hoping for the best, or we can get out and vote. I choose to vote and continue fighting. **VOTE YOUR JOB, LOBBY YOUR HOBBY!**

In Solidarity,

Local News and Events

The following report is on issues and events that concern members of Local 207L

- **76 new hired employees as of 9/21/04**

7 of these employees have resigned and 1 had been released prior to reaching the probation period.

- **1st Stage Changeover Rates implemented on 9/20/04**

The Union has its Time Study committee working on this issue. There are a number of factors that were not addressed by the Company on this rate system. All 1st Stage Builders are advised to use the account number and charge “off-standard” and we will utilize the ‘Bluelined Card’ language in the contract.

- **3rd and 4th Job Bid Openings**

The 4th opening during specific job bid sequences contractually belong to the Company for placement of new hires, job disqualifications, and other placements. During the hiring of 25 or more new employees it is the 3rd opening that belongs to the Company for those purposes. The Union can ask for those openings to be ‘given away’ at, (1) the department level, (2) plant wide, or (3) put up for bid if they are considered “premium jobs.” A ‘premium job’ is, (a) good paying, (b) it usually takes seniority to get. The Company **does not** have to give us these jobs when we request them under our contract. We jeopardize our ability to get these jobs when our members “play games” during these request opportunities.

- **Alcohol/Drug Testing**

The State of Ohio has passed legislation (HB 223) and the Governor has signed into effect starting 10/13/04, the rebuttable presumption law, which is designed to curb substance abuse in the workplace. Under this law, employers can seek disallowance of a workers’ comp claim by an employee who tests positive on a substance test following a work-related injury.

This could also lead into disciplinary procedures for work rule violations. The Union has submitted language to the Company which parallels their Alcohol/Drug policy under ‘probable cause’. The Union does not want this new legislation to turn into a “witch hunt.” Both parties are currently negotiating this issue.

- **Contract Books**

The new contract books have been distributed and every member should have received 3 books. The dental has not changed, therefore the ‘yellow’ book that you received in 2000 will suffice. If any member has not received these books, contact your Union Steward and they will assist you.

- **ITM and VMI (building machines)**

The Company has notified the Union of its intent to operate this, soon to be new department, on a continuous operation. They have stated that it not necessarily has to be the 2-2-3 in our contract. We are currently looking at other operations. There is currently a tentative date of next year’s 1st quarter time table to have this operational.

Always contact your Union Steward first on any issue. They are our 1st line of defense and may be able to resolve issues as they arise. Please do not wait days before you say anything. Time only hampers our ability to represent effectively.



“Near-Hits, Near Misses”

It was a normal day at the plant. A forklift driver was doing the job he had done for years, day in, day out...loading materials from the ground onto a flatbed. Just as he placed the last load, the forks still on the flatbed, the truck pulled out, capsizing the forklift and the driver with it. The forklift operator was crushed to death under the weight of the lift truck.

Everyone at the plant was overwhelmed by this incident and by the death of a fellow employee and friend. Corporate office personnel scrambled to investigate.

The manufacturing leader, responsible for safety at this company's plant, traveled to all facilities and interviewed warehouse and shipping workers. He heard over 100 “near-hit” stories, all very similar but with different outcomes. Only luck had prevented a devastating incident and death, like the one described above, from happening before. All of these plants are now heavily protected from this type of occurrence. If only near-hits had been reported and acted upon, this death could most likely have been avoided.

What is a near-hit? Some would call it a “close call,” a “near miss,” an “oops,” a “thank God.” A near-hit is an unplanned event that has a high probability of injury or property loss.

What better way is there to prevent incidents than by looking at events that just missed being an incident. Collecting near-hits, determining causes, correcting and communicating them could help reduce incidents and injury rates. We encourage all of our members to report ‘near misses’ or ‘near hits’ as soon as possible, as this helps us do a better job protecting you.

Safety Committee

Women Of Steel

District 1 Women of Steel are pleased to announce the 2004 Scholarship winners.

The winner of the \$2,000 Academic Scholarship is Jamie Lynn Rhodes, daughter of Carolyn and James Rhodes, of Rayland, Ohio. James is a member of Local Union No. 1223.

Jamie graduated as Valedictorian of her class at St. John Central High School, Bellair, Ohio. Jamie has been active in Science Club, Spanish Club, S.A.D.D., Future Medical Professionals Club, National Honor Society and Marching Band. She received a superior rating in the Ohio State Science Fair four of her five years of participation. Additionally, she volunteers at Wheeling Medical Park Hospital and works at Martins Ferry Dairy Queen. Miss Rhodes is a member of St. Mary's Parish in Martins Ferry. In the fall she will begin her studies at John Carroll University majoring in Biology.

The recipient of the \$1,500 Technical Institute Scholarship is Eric Wagner, son of Mary and Edward Wagner of Yorkville, Ohio. Eric's father is a member of Local Union No. 1223.

Eric was a four-year letterman in wrestling and three-year letterman in football when he graduated from Buckeye Local High School. He has earned an Eagle Scout rank and is currently the Assistant Scoutmaster of Troop 85 in Brilliant, Ohio. Eric has been accepted at Hocking College in Nelsonville, where he will study environmental restoration.



USWA Local 207L Scholarship Program Awards

Congratulations to the winners of this years' Scholarship Award Program. We apologize for inadvertently leaving it out in last month's edition. We wish the children of our members who received these scholarships the best of luck. Study hard, learn all that you can, and help change this world for the better.

Brittany Lee is the daughter of 2nd Stage Tire Builder Mike Lee. Brittany is currently attending Bowling Green State University.

Jamie Miller is the son of Tireroom millwright Steve Miller. Jamie will be attending Wright State University.

Kristin Camper is the daughter of Gary Camper, an inspector in the Tire Finishing department. Kristen will also be attending Wright State University.



Retirees

Mike Nidek retired September the 15th, 2004. **Dave Zellers** is retiring on October the 1st, 2004 and **Roger Sampson** is also retiring on October the 1st, 2004.

Congratulations from Local 207L.



Local 207L

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**Next Union Meeting
October 11, 2004**



ACROSS

- 41 million people without this in the US and they are trying to privatize it in Canada (two words)
- when we elect people, we expect them to show this
- what you must do to get 15 across
- 30,000 union members protested for these in Washington
- obtaining this avoids a strike
- the city where the last USWA Civil Rights Conference was held
- a meeting or gathering of people to exchange views
- destination of a 2003 fall March
- a major cause of the collapse of companies
- measuring the qualities that deserve merit
- what politicians ask of you, after money
- what LTV and Bethlehem Steel did to it's retirees

DOWN

- we face these during our working lives
- when we give (25 across) to our leaders, it makes our _____ power stronger
- imparting knowledge or skill to do a job right
- events of where we've been and when
- energy affected this industry in the Pacific Northwest
- paying this offers all the services of your union

7. the USWA has this with so many people from so many different walks of life

9. what a union contract gives members

12. it's between poison and pollute in a dictionary and we bear with it each day

13. a hunch or suspicion

14. when companies fail to fulfill their promises or obligations

18. it's not whether we ____ or lose, but how we play ...

19. you can create it with solidarity or a crowbar

22. where companies are moving to avoid paying fair wages

23. a major trade mistake between three countries

26. this could be a booth or a request of a group

