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L-696 earns kudos from Coast Guard

Members build ships for search and rescue

IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS, members of Local 696, Marinette, Wis., have built 19 ships for the U.S. Coast Guard and one barge for the U.S. Navy, totaling over 33,000 tons of vessels.

At one time, the shipbuilding and marine lodge was producing one 185-foot WLM buoy tender every eight weeks — a pace unheard of in the shipbuilding industry.

They recently received recognition when a local newspaper published a letter written by a U.S. Coast Guard commanding officer.

Lt. Edward A. Westfall wrote a letter of thanks to "the hardworking men and women of Marinette Marine Corp., especially to those of you who wear the blue hard hats."

Lt. Westfall stated: "The strongest and everlasting tie we have with this area is the ship we ride in, and what a ship she is! Your blood, sweat, and tears will safely carry us and our memories thousands of miles to our home and into the future."

The ships built by Local 696 members play a vital role in search and rescue missions, such as those conducted recently for Flight 800 and the Kennedy plane.

Local 696 President Dave McMahon commends all the brothers and sisters



An overview of U.S. Coast Guard vessels under construction by Local 696 members at the Marinette Marine Corp. in Wisconsin.

of Local 696 for their outstanding efforts to produce these quality ships. He said, "Not only should the community be proud of the job performed by 696, but the whole country can be proud of these ships, which assure safe passage of all merchant vessels while also protecting and guarding the U.S."

McMahon is proud to be part of the construction and operation of these ships. "We all hope to continue to play a major role in rebuilding the U.S. Coast Guard fleet so that the coast of the greatest country in the world will always be protected and defended," reported McMahon. □

Pennsylvania locals unite to form industrial council to improve service to members

Keystone Industrial Council to represent members from 27 lodges

THE PENNSYLVANIA Keystone Industrial Council held its inaugural meeting on December 7 at the Radisson Hotel in Greentree, Pa. Twenty-seven lodges representing Boilermaker members in Pennsylvania shops belong to the new council.

International Vice President Michael Murphy said the Pennsylvania Keystone Industrial Council will help develop unity among the Pennsylvania locals as they work toward a common goal. "As we enter a new millennium, the council will bring our shops recognition, active involvement, and participation in International activities," Murphy said. "Our brother and sister locals can now develop an inter-related communication as they face problems and issues they may never have encountered before. Through the council we can provide the necessary training that will insure our members' voices are heard."

Elected to serve on the council's leadership committee were Chuck Goodman, Local 151 president, representing the Western Region of Pennsylvania; Joe Wielgosz, Local 159 president, representing the Central Region; Phil Evans, Local 2000 BM-ST, representing the Eastern Region; and Mark Kelly, Local D592 president, representing the Cement Division. Elected to serve as council alternates were



Elected to serve on the Pennsylvania Keystone Industrial Council leadership committee, are, front row, l to r., L-159 Pres. Joe Wielgosz, L-2000 BM-ST Phil Evans, IR Robert Heine Jr., and L-151 Pres. Chuck Goodman. Standing, l to r., are L-906 ST Steve Kosteloc, L-397 VP Frank Lucrezi Jr., and D595 Pres. Mark Kelly.

Frank Lucrezi Jr., Local 397 vice president; and Steve Kosteloc, Local 906 secretary-treasurer. Deputy General Organizer Robert Heine Jr. will preside over committee meetings, handle correspondence, and act as secretary-treasurer for the council.

Heine reported that the enthusiasm for this new council was evident at the inaugural meeting by all the lodges represented. Affiliated lodges include Local 13 (Philadelphia); Local 87 (West Chester); Local 88 (Essington); Local D92 (Bellefonte); Local 151 (Erie); Local 154 (Pittsburgh); Local 159 (Mountain Top); Local D173 (Wampum); Local 196 (Sayre); Local D282 (Wind Gap);

Local 295 (York); Local 300 (Philadelphia); Local 329 (Philadelphia); Local 397 (East Stroudsburg); Local 398 (East Stroudsburg); Local D508 (Darlington); Local D592 (Pittsburgh); Local D596 (Chester); Local 648 (Fullerton); Local 659 (Warren); Local 677 (Kingston); Local 802 (Chester); Local 906 (Donora); Local 1393 (Altoona); Local 1506 (Catasauqua); Local 1592 (Allentown); and Local 2000 (Chester).

These Pennsylvania members produce and provide a wide variety of products and services. "We are a very diversified organization," Heine said,

Continued on page 3

IVP Hickenbotham represents IBB at ICEM World Congress

INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT Jim Hickenbotham attended the World Congress of the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine, and General Worker's Unions (ICEM) in Durban, South Africa, on November 3-5, 1999. Hickenbotham is a member of the ICEM Executive Committee and chairs the ICEM's Cement Industry Sector, which was consolidated into the Glass, Ceramic, Cement, and Associated Industries Sector at this year's ICEM Congress.

Founded in 1995, the ICEM represents 20 million members from unions in more than 90 countries, and is based on six principles: commitment, solidarity, democracy, information, organizing, and effectiveness.

During his trip, Hickenbotham joined the conference delegates in a demonstration of global trade union solidarity. The group marched through the streets of Durban with union ban-



IVP Hickenbotham attends the ICEM World Congress in Durban, South Africa

ners from all continents. Some 800 trade unionists from all parts of the world took part in the march, making a powerful display of the ICEM's central goal - to unite and organize. □

L-667 members get politically educated, get registered to vote



L-667 members could register to vote while attending a political education class.

Local registers highest percentage of members to vote of crafts in state

LOCAL 667 MEMBERS understand how important political participation is. Thanks to 31-year member Raymond "B.B." Smith, members of the Charleston, W. Va., local can attend an annual hands-on program on the structure of the federated labor movement and how state committees on political education (COPE) make their endorsements.

Smith teaches the three-to-six hour course for the Affiliated Construction Trades Foundation with Steve Cook, director of West Virginia University's Institute for Labor Studies and Research. They explore why and how unions participate in politics.

Using an AFL-CIO candidate questionnaire, participants do a mock interview of a legislative candidate, then decide whether to endorse him. In the process, they analyze voting records, assess the credibility of the candidate's interview, and grapple with the nuances of the election and endorsement process.

Smith says, "Many Boilermakers enter the class with a very skeptical view of labor's involvement in politics. They do not necessarily agree that labor should be politically active, nor do they understand or appreciate the complexities of the whole process. By




Raymond "B.B." Smith talks about labor's role in politics to a class of Local 667 members in Charleston, W. Va.

the end of the class, most not only have a much better understanding of how labor is involved, but a greater appreciation of why we're involved."

This year's class learned about voter registration and participation rates in general and primary elections. Those who were not registered to vote, could register at the class.

Eighty-four percent of the Boilermakers in West Virginia are registered to vote. That's the highest percentage of any craft in the state, reports Smith, who credits this success to their efforts to keep their members politically informed and active.

Classes are sponsored and paid for by the Affiliated Construction Trades Foundation. Anyone interested in receiving more information (packets are available) can contact Smith at 304-455-5500. □



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Countdown to Election 2000

Step 1: Register to Vote

Step 2: Vote in the Primaries

Railroad division holds conference in Kansas City

Local lodge delegates improve their leadership skills

THE RAILROAD DIVISION held a conference November 19-20, 1999, in Kansas City, Mo.

Twenty-four local lodge leaders from railroad lodges around the country learned about developments within the railroad industry, laws governing railroad employees and employers, and better ways to take care of the business of their lodges.

International President Charles W. Jones opened the meeting, reminding members of the important role railroad members have played in our union throughout the 20th century. International Sec.-Treas. Jerry Z. Willburn presented a summary of the financial situation of our International union and the Railroad Division.

The first guest speakers were J. Weldon Granger, Mike Vandaveer, and Bruce Halstead, from the law firm of Jones and Granger. They discussed the Federal Employers' Liability Act and gave participants insight into the best ways to handle accidents and other legal claims arising from employment. Jones and Granger have become experts in handling cases involving job site exposure to asbestos, which remains one of the most common causes of work-related illness for railroad members as well as our shipyard and construction members.

Technical Assistant to the International President Gene Lofley Jr. was on hand to explain some of the finer points of completing the government reports required of local unions. Each year, it seems, the federal government adds more paperwork for local lodges. Lofley reminded the delegates that his office is available for assistance in completing them.

Bill Loweth, from Employee Benefit Systems, Inc., Neil McCulley, of



ABOVE: Joe Stinger, Railroad Division director and admin. asst. to the Intl. pres., addresses the Railroad Conference.



TOP RIGHT: Local lodge leaders listen to speakers.

RIGHT: International Representatives for the Railroad Division (l. to r.) Scott Enge, Alan Scheer, and Steven Eames give reports.



Provident Insurance, and Dan Miller, of United Health Care, discussed current issues involving healthcare and life insurance for railroad members.

One of the most significant discussions of every Railroad Division conference is always the Railroad Retirement presentation, and this year was no exception. Jim Boehner, the labor member of the Railroad Retirement Board, went over recent and expected future developments for Railroad Retirement. He explained how the full retirement age will slowly increase over the next two decades.

Full retirement age is the age at which you can receive a full Tier I benefit with no reduction for early retirement. If you have at least 30 years of railroad service, you may retire at age 62 with no Tier I age reduction.

If you were born before January 2, 1938, your full retirement age is 65. For people born after that date, the full retirement age increases by two months each year through 1943. All workers born January 2, 1943, through January 1,

1955, have a full retirement age of 66. Then the retirement age increases by two months per year again. All persons born after January 1, 1960, will have a full retirement age of 67.

This increase is the same as for Social Security. A chart illustrating the increase is provided on page ten of this *Reporter*.

Railroad Division Director Joe Stinger discussed recent negotiations for the national agreements. He discussed how far apart the two sides are. Many employer demands are simply unacceptable, because they threaten the viability of the Railroad Retirement fund or other benefits railroad workers

currently enjoy. It remains to be seen what changes will actually occur over the next few years.

The railroad conference ended with reports from International Representatives Scott Enge, Alan Scheer, and Steven Eames. These reports are one of the most enlightening sections of the conference, because lodge delegates can compare notes about situations in their local areas.

The conference was a learning experience for all who attended, and participants went back to their lodges more aware of problems facing the railroad industry and more able to handle some of the responsibilities of leadership. □

Keystone Industrial Council forms in Pennsylvania

Continued from page 1

"and this council represents the best of the best in our respective industries."

The council's goals are as follows:

- Advancing the quality of education for all members
- Fostering the dignity and worth of all members through collective action
- Being a leader on educational and professional issues
- Being an advocate for improvement and equity in compensation
- Defending the rights of union employees
- Providing members with quality service.

Heine credits International President Charles W. Jones and IVP Murphy for laying the ground work for the council's development. He also thanks Assistants to the International President Victor Maggio and Ande Abbott, along with International Representatives Carey Allen, Steve Beal, Rocco DeRollo, Steve Jewell, and Michael Shaffer for their role in making the inaugural meeting such a success. He sends a special thanks to the members of the Buckeye Industrial Council's leadership committee for their support at the inaugural meeting - Jeff Beitel of Local 1073 (Cleveland, Ohio), Terry Heiser of Local 1191 (Canton, Ohio), and Vernon Persons of Local 908 (Wadsworth, Ohio). □

Railroad Retirement tax rate stays same in 2000, benefits rise

RAILROAD RETIREMENT beneficiaries saw an increase in their monthly checks the first of this year.

Like Social Security, Railroad Retirement annuities rise each year based on rises in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This year, Tier I benefits increased 2.4 percent. Tier II benefits increased 0.8 percent.

The Railroad Retirement tax rate on earnings remained the same. Tier I taxes take 6.2 percent out of the first \$76,200 of each employee's paycheck. Employer's pay the same percentage.

Tier II taxes of 4.9 percent will also be deducted from the first \$56,700 a railroad employee earns. Employers pay 16.1 percent of the employee's first \$56,700.

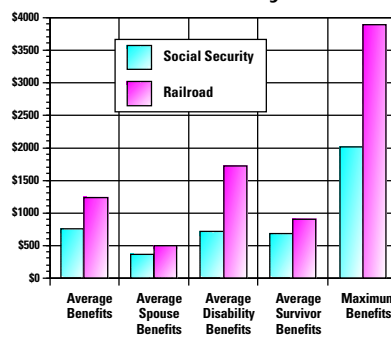
These are the same tax rates as last year. However,

the maximum amount taxed rose, based on the CPI.

The amount annuitants can earn from nonrailroad employment without affecting benefits also rises. For those under age 65, the exempt earnings amount rises to \$10,080 in 2000 from \$9,600 in 1999. For beneficiaries ages 65 through 69, the exempt earnings amount rises to \$17,000 in 2000 from \$15,500 in 1999. These earnings limitations do not apply to any annuitants age 70 or older, starting with the month in which they are 70.

For those under age 65, the earnings deduction is \$1 in benefits for every \$2 of earnings over the exempt amount. For those ages 65 through 69, the deduction is \$1 for every \$3 of earnings over the exempt amount. No railroad retirement annuity is payable for any

Railroad Retirement benefits exceed Social Security benefits



month in which an annuitant (retired employee, spouse, or survivor) works for a railroad employer or railroad union. Workers covered under the Railroad

Retirement Act are taxed at higher rates than those on Social Security, but pension benefits are also higher, as the chart on this page illustrates. □

IBB completes its 11th mobile training trailer

Local 4 to use mobile welding center to prepare new members for job opportunities

THE INTERNATIONAL Brotherhood has just completed building its 11th training trailer. Instructors from the Boilermakers National Apprenticeship Program (BNAP) lined a 42-foot trailer with a fireproof concrete siding. They then added a metal floor, and built a small classroom and six welding booths. The trailer's equipment includes a burning table, one-half of a boiler for tube-rolling, and a tube panel. The trailer is destined for the Navajo Reservation in Arizona, where members of Local 4 (headquartered in



BNAP training instructors, l. to r., Dave Crawford, Carl Oliver, John Standish, and Louie Lombardi transformed a 42-foot trailer into a mobile welding training center.

Page, Ariz.), will use the equipment to improve their welding, burning, and tube-rolling skills. □



l. to r., Intl. Pres. Charles W. Jones, Intl. Sec.-Treas. Jerry Willburn, and BNAP training instructor Louie Lombardi view the newest welding training trailer.

Local M114 sponsors steward training seminar in Aurora, Ill.



MEMBERS OF LOCAL M114, Aurora, Ill., attended a one-day steward's training seminar on October 5.

Intl. Rep. Howard Cole conducted the program for local officers, committee persons, and stewards. Upon request, Cole administered the "Obligation of New Members" from the Brotherhood's Ritual, reporting that the M114 members really appreci-

ated this "moment in time." Pictured, front row, l. to r., are Sidney Balfour, Andy Contreas, Carla Butler (chief steward), and Pat Joy; second row, l. to r., Bill Coleman, Randy Lloyd, and Sec.-Treas. Anna Garcia; third row, l. to r., Madeline Kinard, Dorothy Visor, and Pres. Jose Galindo; and back row, l. to r., Reno Gonzales, Martha Oaxaca, and Gilbert Velasquez. □



The half-boiler and tube panel pictured above will be securely mounted inside this 42-foot training trailer before transportation to Local 4, where members of the Page, Ariz., local will use this equipment to improve their welding, burning, and tube-rolling skills.

Eleven represent Boilermakers at Metal Trades Convention



ELEVEN MEMBERS of the Boilermakers union participated in the AFL-CIO's Metal Trades Convention, where delegates unanimously endorsed Al Gore for president of the United States.

Other significant convention action included the passing of a number of resolutions promoting shipbuilding in the United States, and the strengthening of worker's rights.

Representing the Boilermakers at the Las Vegas convention, were, front row, l. to r., Linda Young of Local 90, Pearl

Harbor, Hawaii; Intl. Sec.-Treas. Jerry Willburn; Intl. Pres. Charles W. Jones; Intl. Vice Pres. Othel Smith Jr.; and Intl. Rep. Tom Kendall. Back row, l. to r., Shipbuilding and Marine Division Director Ande Abbott; Ted Thomas of Local 72, Portland, Ore.; Intl. Rep. Dave Bunch; Tim Carr of Local 104, Seattle, Wash.; Phil Evans of Local 2000, Chester, Pa.; and Frank George of Local 531, Amarillo, Texas. Kendall is also president of the Pacific Coast Metal Trades Council.

Photo by Kenefick Communications. □

How to Apply For a Boilermaker Scholarship

Boilermaker scholarships totaling \$50,000 will be awarded in 2000 – apply before March 31

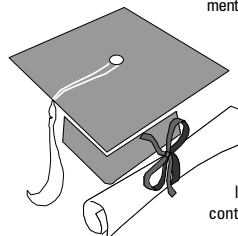
ARE YOU READY for college? A Boilermaker scholarship might get you off to a good start.

Boilermaker scholarships are open to high school seniors who will be entering their first year of a two- or four-year academic program at a degree-granting, accredited college or university within one year of their high school graduation and are dependents of Boilermaker members in good standing (includes son, daughter, legally adopted child or dependent of active, retired, disabled, or deceased members).

Scholarship awards are based upon academic record, extra-curricular and outside school activities, career goals, and performance on a typed essay. Candidates must submit an official application (typed and postmarked between January 1 and March 31), proof of relationship to a Boilermaker member, SAT and/or ACT test scores (for U.S. citizens only), a high school transcript, and a 300-500 word typed-essay on a specific theme. The essay theme for 2000 applicants is "What impact has right-to-work legislation had on the economic well-being of workers in the states and provinces where it has already been implemented, and what is the real motive of national right-to-work and merit shop organizations?"

Applications for the 2000 awards became available December 15, 1999. Contact your local lodge for more information and an application form.

Some local lodges also have their own scholarship programs. Scholarships are also available through some state and regional labor councils. For information on their scholarships, contact these organizations directly.



Will the U.S. build ships this century?

Future of U.S. shipbuilding industry is at risk – along with national security

AS WE ENTER the 21st century, pundits around the country are comparing the 1900s with what we can expect in the 2000s. In most areas, the next century looks promising, but when it comes to shipbuilding and our merchant marine, recent events suggest we are merely repeating mistakes from the past.

In the early 20th century, the U.S. was just beginning to show the economic power that would allow our nation to build the largest economy in the world. But even in those early years, many American politicians failed to see the importance of maintaining a strong merchant marine.

The cartoon at right, taken from the March 1904 *Boilermaker Journal*, illustrates that in 1904, ship owners were already beginning to register their ships in foreign countries. It appeared in response to news that two passenger ships built in Philadelphia had changed from American to Belgian registry.

Today, it is difficult to find a passenger vessel registered in the U.S. Cruise liners register in Libya, Panama, or wherever they can get the lowest tax rates. A big difference between 1904 and today, though, is that it is even rarer to find a passenger ship – or any commercial ship of significant size – built in the U.S.

As our nation grew in importance, the shipbuilding industry grew, along with our merchant marine. The size and success of our shipbuilders and merchant marine was largely responsible for our success in World War II.

U.S. ships were the backbone of the arsenal of democracy that won the war

SINCE THE END of World War II, our shipbuilding industry and merchant marine have both slowly declined. In 1980, that decline became rapid.

During World War II, America's shipyards employed 1.2 million people, not counting the millions of people employed throughout the shipbuilding supplier base. By 1998, employment had fallen to 60,800 in new ship construction in the United States.

Since 1980, the American shipbuilding industry has been shrinking dramatically. In 1981, there were 22 shipyards holding ship construction contracts for the government, commercial customers, or both. By 1999, the number of active new construction shipyards building large oceangoing vessels had fallen to six.

This phenomenal drop was primarily caused by President Ronald Reagan, who unilaterally did away with shipbuilding subsidies in 1981. He hoped other nations would voluntarily suspend their subsidies as well, opening the market to "pure" capitalism.

Those other countries, though, were too smart for that. Several of them – most notably Germany, Japan, Korea, Denmark, and China – immediately increased their subsidies. The result was that companies wanting new ships built or old ships repaired took their business to the countries offering the lowest prices.

These countries understood what the U.S. still has not learned: shipbuilding uses so much labor and material that it stimulates the economy. Countries that expanded their shipbuilding industries through subsidies are enjoying healthy, growing economies.

Our merchant marine is disappearing

THE U.S. MERCHANT MARINE has shrunk even more drastically than shipbuilding. During the 1950s, U.S.-flagged ships carried 40 percent of all cargo entering or exiting U.S. ports. Today, while the U.S. is the world's largest importer and exporter, U.S.-flagged ships carry less than ten percent of that cargo.

Writing in *Sea History* (Summer 1997), David A. O'Neil, president of Seaworthy Systems Inc. and the Society of Naval Architects and Engineers, points out the threat our declining merchant marine is to our national security: "A superpower without a viable merchant fleet is hardly capable of projecting the power required to prevent many 'police actions,' let alone carry them out when required."

In World War II, the U.S. had over 200,000 merchant marines and hundreds of ships who provided support for our troops overseas. During the Persian Gulf conflict in 1990, the U.S. had to rely on the merchant marines of our allies to ship munitions and equipment to the Persian Gulf. It remains to be seen what our country will do if a larger conflict breaks out in the near future.



An agreement between Ingalls and American Classic Voyages Co. last year to build three large passenger ships – the first to be built in a U.S. shipyard in 40 years – is a hopeful sign. But one contract for three passenger ships is hardly enough to turn the industry around. It is a first step, but to regain our position as world leader in shipbuilding, we need to build every type of oceangoing ship.

The U.S. Navy needs more ships

IN THE ABSENCE of commercial shipbuilding, the U.S. Navy has become the main customer for new ships as well as ship repairs and updating. But even that market is slipping away.

In recent years, the Navy has begun repairing an increasing number of ships overseas. In addition, they are not purchasing new ships at the same level as they have in the past.

Although the U.S. continues to send American troops to foreign countries, the U.S. Navy is procuring fewer ships now than at any time since 1932, at the height of the Great Depression. The current U.S. fleet is the smallest it has been since 1917, the year before the U.S. entered World War I.

In January 1999, Admiral Jay L. Johnson, chief of Naval Operations, distributed a report in which he emphasized the need to build more ships. In his report, he notes that in the decade following the fall of the Berlin Wall, the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps have been called upon to respond to crises and combat more than 75 times – three times the Cold War operations tempo.

He points to the fact that our fleet is shrinking. Military ships have a life expectancy of 35 years. Over the past 35 years, the Navy would have had to purchase an average of 8.6 new ships per year to keep the

fleet at the same level. However, the Navy has been falling far below that number for several years. In the ten-year period ending with 2003, the U.S. Navy will have purchased only 57 new ships, 29 short of the number needed for simple replacement.

Our submarine fleet is particularly at risk. During the 14 years beginning in 1990, the U.S. Navy plans to buy seven new submarines, 20 to 23 submarines short of the replacement rate needed.

Meanwhile, Congress continues to reduce the budget for the Department of Defense. One of their favorite ways to reduce the budget is to cut back on purchase of new equipment.

Congressional support for the U.S. shipbuilding industry – and for our merchant marine – is spotty at best. Each year the Boilermakers and other unions have to force back attempts to repeal the Jones Act, which requires that cargo being shipped from one U.S. port to another must be carried on a U.S.-flagged ship. In the name of cost-efficiency, members of Congress have attempted to do away with this provision and allow ships of any nation to ply our coastal waters, rivers, and lakes.

In 1999, John McCain introduced S. 1500, the most recent attempt to do away with the protections of the Jones Act. This bill opens the door to all kinds of abuses. Ships are bound by the laws of the nation to which they are registered, not the port where they call. A foreign-flagged ship carrying cargo from Boston to New York, or from New Orleans to St. Louis, would not be bound by U.S. labor laws, such as minimum wage and worker's compensation, even though it would be operating entirely within the waters of the U.S. – and even within our borders, in many cases. We must stop this bill.

And if we hope to revive our failing shipbuilding industry, we need to educate a lot of politicians. □

Are we really ever going to see a federal budget surplus?

Politicians say yes – but others are skeptical

LEADING ECONOMISTS IN Washington ponder the federal surplus every day. Predictions of \$3 trillion in surpluses over the next ten years has led to tax cut proposals, including the one being promised by presidential hopeful George W. Bush.

But we hear promises from politicians all the time. The promise of a budget surplus after so many years of deficits raises questions.

Will there really be a surplus? How big will it be? If there is one, where is the money coming from? What portion comes from the regular budget, and what portion is really coming from the Social Security fund? And how much is really available for a tax cut?

We found some interesting answers to these questions in a report prepared by the American Association of Retired Persons, based on a study by the Congressional Budget Office.

First of all, the only reason the government is showing an annual surplus now is because of the Social Security trust fund. Last year, the government reported its first overall surplus since 1969. It totaled \$69 billion, but only because the \$99 billion surplus in the Social Security fund was used to offset the government's operating budget deficit of -\$30 billion.

Social Security funds are strictly for Social Security beneficiaries. The government lumps this fund's receipts into its "unified budget" in order to get a total picture of the government's finances. The Social Security fund needs to continue to build up its surplus to pay benefits when the baby-boom generation starts to retire. At that time, withdrawals from the trust fund will increase dramatically, but the number of workers paying into the fund will decline.

U.S. trade deficit soars to record

Economists say deficit is getting dangerously high

THE U.S. TRADE deficit jumped to a record \$25.94 billion in October. At the current pace, our trade deficit in 1999 will balloon to more than \$265 billion, from last year's \$164 billion. That would be an increase of more than 61 percent in a year – a pace that will devastate the U.S. economy if it continues.

The trade deficit is the dollar amount by which our imports exceeded our exports. A trade deficit of \$25.94 billion means that in October, the U.S. imported nearly \$26 billion more than we exported.

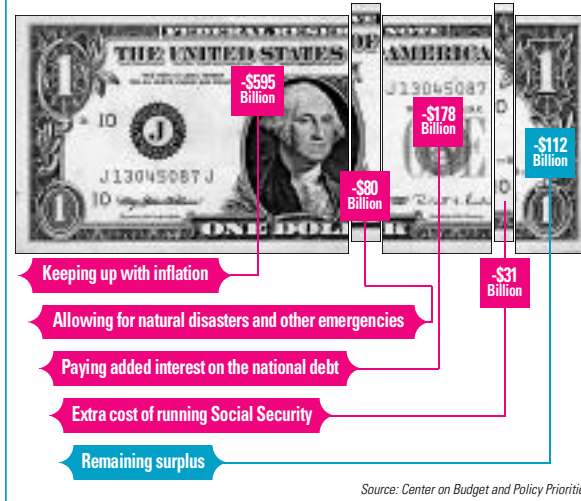
A growing deficit can have disastrous effects. Exports bring money into the country; imports send money out. Running a trade deficit of \$265 billion means that we have to borrow \$265 billion from foreign investors.

If our gap keeps growing, foreign investors may begin to lose confidence in the U.S. economy and the U.S. dollar and demand a higher premium for doing business here. That would translate into higher U.S. interest rates.

On October 28, Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan recognized this threat when he issued the following warning: "A continuing widening

The surplus dollar may be smaller than you think

Government projections say the non-Social Security surplus may rise over the next decade to a ten-year total of \$1 trillion, which this dollar bill represents. But when a few reasonable assumptions are made, as shown, the surplus dollar shrinks to more like a dime.



Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

All this talk about a tax cut now is based on surpluses that can only be used for Social Security beneficiaries.

But there is the prospect of another surplus – one that doesn't involve the Social Security funds. Projections show one might occur, beginning as early as this year. The question is, just how realistic are those projections?

Two trillion dollars of the projected surplus over the next ten years is expected to come from Social Security, but another \$1 trillion in surplus dollars is expected to be generated by our strong economy.

Many experts, however, think this \$1 trillion surplus will never materialize because of spending limitations and needs that Congress just can't avoid. They say the only way to meet the spending limits is to cut back on programs. And there is always the possibility of unexpected budget additions, such as the Kosovo emergency and natural disasters such as Hurricane Floyd.

When all of this is considered, the anticipated surplus shrivels into one-tenth of its projected size. That is better than a deficit, but it is not enough to pay for a massive tax cut. □

Per Capita tax goes up 65 cents a month

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2000, the Boilermakers per capita tax increased by four percent (\$0.65 when rounded to the nearest five cents), for a total monthly per capita tax payment of \$16.40.

The monthly per capita tax payment is adjusted each January 1 to keep up with inflation, in accordance with convention action taken in 1973. The increase is based on the percentage increase in average hourly earnings in manufacturing as issued by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for the 12-month period, July to July. According to the BLS, from July 1998 to July 1999, these earnings increased four percent – from \$13.38 to \$13.92, compared to a 2.4 percent increase in 1998.

The per capita tax finances all activities of the International. As provided for in the International constitution, 15 percent goes to the defense fund to pay for weekly strike benefits; 3.5 percent goes to the publication fund for all costs associated with this paper; 3.5 percent goes to the convention fund; and 78 percent goes for everything else, including meetings and conferences, service to local lodges, education and training of local lodge officers and stewards, organizing, collective bargaining research, legal expenses, and all other activities required of an organization that serves nearly 90,000 members.

College grant honors Boilermaker IVP

STUDENTS AT ROCKY Mountain College are eligible for a \$500 grant in aid, thanks to Mary Ruth Stender and Evelyn Sanders. They established the John Stender Memorial Scholarship to honor their husband and brother, respectively. John Stender was a Boilermaker IVP who was elected a Washington state senator and later became the first director of OSHA.

Students may contact the Rocky Mountain College, 1511 Poly Drive, Billings MT 59102, or call 1-800-877-6259.

Watch mail for Social Security statement

IN OCTOBER, the Social Security Administration began mailing annual earnings and benefit estimate statements to the 125 million workers age 25 and older who are not already receiving monthly Social Security benefits.

Keep an eye out for this four-page publication, called the "Social Security Statement." It can help you plan your financial future.

The statement provides estimates of the Social Security retirement, disability, and survivors benefits you and your family could be eligible to receive now and in the future. The statement also provides you with an easy way to determine whether your earnings (or self-employment income) are accurately posted on your Social Security record.

It is important that your earnings are correctly reported and recorded. The amount of your future benefits is based on your earnings record. Inaccurate records may keep you from receiving all the benefits you are entitled to. The statement includes instructions on how you can correct any errors in your record.

You can expect to receive your annual statement three months before your birthday. For more information about Social Security benefits, call or visit a local Social Security office; call this toll-free number, 1-800-772-1213; or visit this web site, www.ssa.gov. □

of the deficit could eventually raise financing difficulties." Obviously, such "financing difficulties" would hardly help our stock market.

As our trade deficit grows, the influence of foreign investors on our economy also grows. According to the U.S. Treasury, the buildup of foreign holdings of U.S. securities during the past five years has been the most rapid since statistics have been kept or estimated. Foreigners already own over 40 percent of all marketable U.S. Treasury securities. Their holdings of U.S. agency, corporate, and municipal debt is \$1 trillion. Their ownership of U.S. equities exceeds \$1 trillion.

Consumers drive trade deficit

THE DRIVING FORCE behind the growth of imports is the American shopper. Popular megastores such as Wal-Mart sell imported goods almost exclusively. American shoppers, looking for bargains, buy clothing from China, electronics from Korea, and shoes from Singapore.

This fall, shoppers have bought record amounts of imports, and the trend continued into the holiday buying season. In October, imports rose to an unprecedented \$107.86 billion, while exports slipped to \$81.92 billion.

The trade deficit was nearly \$2 billion larger than Wall Street had predicted only a month earlier.

Imports from China rose to a record \$8.22 billion in October, pushing the deficit to \$7.15 billion. Shipments from Japan rose to \$12.17 billion, boosting the deficit to a record \$7.18 billion – the largest deficit with any country on record. Imports from Mexico rose to a record \$10 billion.

Experts say such strong growth in the trade deficit cannot last. Dean Baker, economist and the co-director of the Center for Economics and Policy Research (CEPR), points out that a large foreign debt lowers future living standards, because the United States will have to export more goods in order to keep its current account in balance.

If the foreign debt continues to grow at its present rate as a percentage of the gross domestic product (GDP), in ten years it will equal 60 percent of the GDP, or about \$5.5 trillion.

In the 1980s, when the trade deficit was much smaller both in real dollars and as a percentage of the GDP, the government began enacting "free trade" policies in an attempt to open foreign borders so we could export more goods. As these policies have expanded, our exports have, in fact, risen, but not as fast as our imports. □



Make your house a 100% union house

Union-made kitchen & household items

IS YOUR HOME a union-supporting household? Most union members would say yes. But often we forget that one of the best ways to support other union members is to buy the products they make. Just about everything you need can be bought from a union manufacturer. Many household appliances are even made by Boilermakers. The **boldface** items on this list are made by members of our union.

The rest of the list was compiled from the AFL-CIO's Union Label & Service Trades Department's database, and contains products made by members of the following unions: The American Flint Glass Workers (AFGWU), the United Auto Workers (UAW), the Electrical Workers (IBEW), the Electronic Workers (IUE), the United Food & Commercial Workers (UFCW), the Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics & Allied Workers (GMP), the Machinists (IAM), the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical & Energy Workers (PACE), the Steelworkers (USWA), and the Teamsters (IBT).

Dishes and glasses

Anchor (tumblers, stemware); Anchor Hocking (glassware); Corelle (crystal glassware); Indiana Glass (tumblers, pressed dinnerware); Lancaster, Fostoria (blown tumblers, pressed dinnerware); Hall (China tableware and kitchenware); Homer Laughlin (China tableware and kitchenware); Lenox (China tableware and kitchenware); Mayer China, Shenago China (tableware and kitchenware)

Major Appliances



Comstock Castle Stove (commercial gas ranges by members of Local S3, Quincy, Ill.); **Premier, Eagle, Magic Chef, Heritage** (gas and electric ranges by members of Local S4, Belleville, Ill.); **Thermador** (cook tops, built-in ovens, trash compactors, and dishwashers by mem-

bers of Local S54, Maywood, Calif.); **Vulcan Hart** (commercial gas ranges, deep fryers by members of Local S50, Baltimore, Md.); **Whirlpool** (Kitchen Aide built-in designer wall unit refrigerator/freezers by members of Local S272, Lavergne, Tenn.); **Wolf Range** (commercial gas ranges by members of Local S106, Compton, Calif.)

Small Appliances

Heat & Control Co. (commercial cooking equipment by members of Local 6, Oakland, Calif.); **Wagner Mfg.** (cookware by members of Local M108, Sidney, Ohio); Rival, Simer, Pollenex, Blonaire, Patton, Crock-Pot, White Mountain (waffle makers, toasters, can openers, slow cookers, blenders, and mixers); Nutone (blenders); Westbend, Chip Factory, Brew N' Serve (bread machines, woks, skillets, popcorn poppers, coffee percolators, urns, slow cookers); Mr. Coffee (percolators); Melitta (percolators); The Green Line, Hamilton Beach, Proctor-Silex (coffee makers, fans, other electric housewares); Cecil Ware (coffee urns, cappuccino dispensers)

Cookware, Ovenware

All-Clad, Anchor, Calphalon, Corelle Ware, Corning, Ekco Oven Secret, General Housewares, Mirro, Levson, Leyse, Presto, Regal Ware, Toroware, Wearerver

Cutlery

Camillus, Carvel Hall, Lancaster, Utica & Walco

Storage Containers

Akron-Mils, Li'l Helpers, Rubbermaid, Tamor, Tupperware

Miscellaneous

Chicago Faucet (kitchen, bath, and commercial faucets by members of Local M6, Chicago, Ill.); **DCI of Utah** (food tanks by members of Local 182, Salt Lake City, Utah); **HAVCO** (food catering to steel plants by members of Local D494, Burlington, Ontario, Canada); **Jacks-Evans** (stove pipe, barbecue utensils by members of Local

Don Lacefield elected IVP for Western States

THE INTL. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL voted Don Lacefield into the office of International vice president for the Western States at a meeting in Palm Springs, Calif., January 12. Lacefield was nominated by Intl. President Charles W. Jones to take the position vacated by Jack Sloan's retirement.

Lacefield began his Boilermaker career as an apprentice in Local Lodge 101, Denver, in 1963. In 1967, he became the first apprentice to graduate in the Missouri Valley agreement's apprentice program.

In 1970, he was appointed assistant business manager and dispatcher for Lodge 101, and was elected to be the lodge's business manager-secretary treasurer in 1972. After serving two terms as business manager, Lacefield was appointed to the International staff in November 1975, as a representative for the Construction Department and the National Tank Maintenance department (now National Transient Division).

Lacefield began working exclusively for the Construction Division when it was created in 1977. While an International representative for the Rocky Mountain states and Pacific Coast, Lacefield handled numerous



Don Lacefield is the new International vice president for the Western States.

special assignments as a hearing officer. In 1996, Intl. President Jones appointed him assistant to the International president.

Since July 1, 1999, Lacefield has been handling the work of the Western States IVP office in preparation for Sloan's disability retirement. □

Martin visits Romania for ACYPL

She serves as delegate on mission, takes one-year job for DNC in 2000

BRIDGET MARTIN, Boilermakers' assistant to the director of legislation, was selected by the American Council of Young Political Leaders (ACYPL) to serve as a delegate on a U.S. mission to Romania. Martin joined a bipartisan delegation of seven leaders from around the United States for a two-week trip, Nov. 19 to Dec. 3, 1999.

While in Romania, shemet with government and business leaders. Martin said the trip awakened in her "a new sense of pride in our democratic form of government and a commitment to make sure the freedom we all enjoy is preserved for generations to come."

She spoke of the many contrasts in Romania, including "the geographical and historical intersection of Eastern and Western cultures; the prominence of political parties in a recently established democracy; and the richness of the country's culture and history."

The trip was funded by a grant from the U.S. Dept. of State. The ACYPL promotes awareness and understanding of the opportunities and challenges which face all nations. ACYPL exchanges provide common ground upon which emerging political leaders can foster lasting relationships. Former participants have risen to positions of political prominence, including service as members of Congress, governors, cabinet secretaries, and prime ministers.

Martin was selected from a field of 1,000 elected and appointed officials between the ages of 25 and 41. Working with Legislative Director Ande Abbott,



Bridget Martin meets with Prof. Dr. Emil Constantinescu, president of Romania.

Martin has lobbied members of the U.S. Congress, helped produce educational materials on legislative issues, and coordinated the annual conference of the Boilermakers' Legislative-Education Action Program (LEAP). She is working toward a master's degree in government at Johns Hopkins University in Washington, D.C.

Prior to the trip, she attended briefings on political and economic issues facing Romania, as well as key issues in U.S. relations. These briefings included meetings with officials at the State Department, the U.S. Information Agency, and former ACYPL delegates.

Following her trip to Romania, Martin began a one-year sabbatical from her Boilermaker position to work for the Democratic National Committee (DNC) as assistant to the chairman for labor affairs. She will serve as a political liaison with organized labor, and will coordinate the labor component of the Democratic convention.

Clarissa Middleton, who worked for Congressman John Lewis (D-GA), has temporarily assumed Martin's duties in the Boilermakers' legislative office. □

S185, Belleville, Ill.); **Kraft Food** (salad dressings by members of Local 480, Jacksonville, Ill.); **Olympic Food** (prepared foods by members of Local M24, Kokomo, Ind.); **St. Charles Mfg.** (kitchen cabinets by members of Local 1600, St. Charles, Ill.); Nutone (security systems); **Royal Brass** (faucets by members of Local M3, Cleveland,

Ohio); Mini Churro Warmers, Nestaway (dish drainers, oven racks); Alabaster (plastic housewares); Carson, Old English Sea (pewter giftware); Spartus (kitchen wall clocks); Nesco, Supreme, Open Country Campware, Empire (electrical housewares); Nutone (ventilation fans); All-American (aluminum housewares). □

Tax breaks for corporations are welfare for the wealthy

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE to lower your income tax bill by five percent this year? That is the amount the total corporate tax rate has declined since 1995.

During that time, business has been great. Corporate profits rose nearly nine percent last year alone. Yet the U.S. government collected \$4 billion less in corporate income tax revenue – a reduction of 2.5 percent.

For the rest of us – workers and small businesses – higher income means higher taxes. But for huge, multinational corporations, the rules are different. Corporations can take advantage of tax breaks for a variety of ordinary business activities – mergers and acquisitions, research and development, and business meals and entertainment.

In addition, Congress has loaded the tax code with corporate-friendly loopholes like accelerated depreciation and tax breaks for foreign investments.

These tax breaks amount to hidden subsidies for corporations and the rich. When the government allows a corporation to forego paying a million dollars in taxes because of a tax break, the net effect for both the government and the corporation is the same as if the government simply wrote them a check. The government has a million dollars less in its treasury than it would without the tax break, and the corporation has a million dollars more.

Congress refers to this type of subsidy as a “tax expenditure.” For the corporation, it works as well as a direct payment. For Congress, however, it works even better.

With the public distrustful of government waste, Congress must justify any new spending. In addition, they must prove each year that their program is working to keep it in the budget.

But tax expenditures show up as tax cuts, something voters like to see. In addition, once put into place, tax expenditures do not have to be reviewed by Congress each year. They continue until someone proposes a bill to remove them. Oversight for the expenditure moves from Congress to the IRS, and the IRS is only concerned with whether the law is being followed, not whether the subsidy is having the effect it was intended to have.

The advantage tax entitlements enjoy over direct spending programs is illustrated in the budget just approved by Congress. That budget includes reductions in nearly every area of domestic discretionary spending as a share of the economy over the next decade. Tax subsidies, though, will continue to grow over the same period.

Here are some of the most prevalent forms of tax subsidies.

Transfer pricing

TWO-THIRDS OF foreign-based corporations are doing hundreds of billions of dollars of business in the U.S. without paying a penny of American income taxes according to a study by the General Accounting Office. These corporations take advantage of a tactic called “transfer pricing.”

By manipulating the prices they charge themselves for goods and services they move among related parts of their business, they are able to make it appear that profits earned in the U.S. come from countries with lower taxes.

For example, in its 1987 annual report to its stockholders, IBM said that a third of its worldwide profits were earned by

its U.S. operations. But on its federal tax return, IBM treated so much of its tax-deductible research and development expenses as U.S.-related that it reported almost no U.S. earnings – despite \$25 billion in U.S. sales that year. As a result, IBM’s federal income taxes for 1987 were virtually wiped out.

The Christian Science Monitor reports that some foreign-based firms claimed their U.S. operations in 1998 bought toothbrushes for \$171 each and pantyhose for \$38 a pair. They sold missile and rocket launchers for \$13 each and radial tires for \$5 apiece. Estimates for how much such imaginative transfer-pricing will cost the U.S. Treasury run as high as \$30 billion.

Accelerated depreciation

BETWEEN 1992 AND 1994, American Home Products earned \$4.2 billion in profits. At the standard corporate income tax rate of 35 percent, they should have paid \$1.47 billion in taxes. But by exercising tax breaks, mainly accelerated depreciation, they paid only about \$665 million, to make their actual tax rate 15.6 percent. In 1995, Eastman Kodak paid an effective federal tax rate of only 17.3 percent, mainly because of accelerated depreciation.

And General Motors actually got tax refunds of almost \$1.4 billion dollars in 1995 and 1996, despite reported U.S. profits of \$5.2 billion, in large part due to depreciation tax breaks generated by its leasing activities.

Accelerated depreciation allows businesses to write off their purchases of machinery, equipment, and buildings for tax purposes faster than the assets actually wear out. In 1997, Congress enacted laws that made it possible to combine debt-financing and accelerated depreciation to produce “negative” tax rates. The government actually pays corporations to purchase new equipment.

The Research and Experimentation Tax Credit

IN 1981, CONGRESS enacted a tax credit for research and experimentation to encourage business research that would otherwise not be undertaken because other investment opportunities would be more profitable.

This credit supplements the already extremely favorable tax treatment of research and development investments, which can be deducted immediately, rather than over time like investments in tangible assets.

One has to wonder why Congress thinks it is appropriate to interfere with marketplace decisions in this way. Useful business research is undeniably a good thing. But so are many other business activities. Research is also highly profitable, especially in our technology-dominated world. There is no reason why Congress should try to encourage such investments at the expense of other investments when they are not otherwise profitable.

Business meals and entertainment subsidies

UNDER CURRENT LAW, spending on meals that bear a “reasonable and proximate relationship to a trade or business” and are “conducive to a business discussion” are both 50 percent deductible and excluded from the income of the recipients.

There’s no requirement that business actually be discussed, either before, during, or after the meal. Likewise, entertainment outlays – for golf, hockey tickets, etc. – are 50 percent deductible if the taxpayer has more than a general expectation of deriving a specific business benefit from the activity, or if the entertainment is directly preceded or followed by a substantial and bona fide business discussion. Such a discussion does not have to occur on the same day as the entertainment, nor does it have to last as long.

If one were to make a list of government spending priorities, a subsidy for

Continued on page 9

George W. Bush’s tax plan benefits his wealthy campaign donors

Richest 20 percent get two-thirds of tax cuts

HIS FATHER SAID, “Read my lips; no new taxes” when he was running for president. Now George W. Bush is saying he’ll actually reduce taxes for working families.

The first Bush couldn’t keep his promise. Will his son do any better?

Not according to an analysis of the plan by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP). In a press release, Bush said his plan would “benefit all Americans, but reserve the greatest percentage reduction for the lowest income families.”

The ITEP analysis shows that in fact the plan would give the lowest 20 percent of wage earners a 5.9 percent reduction in their federal taxes, for an average savings of less than \$4 per month. The best-off one-percent of taxpayers would see a reduction of 15.7 percent, for an average tax cut of over \$50,000.

No matter how you slice it – by percentages or by total money saved – George W. Bush’s tax plan favors the wealthy donors who have contributed so much money to his presidential campaign.

Bush’s misleading claims about the tax cuts come from focussing entirely on the federal income tax. The lowest tax bracket would drop from 15 to 10 percent. Because not all income is taxed, that would cut taxes for the poorest taxpayers about \$43 a year. Most of the tax breaks in Bush’s plan, however, give an edge to people who are already doing well.

Here is a breakdown of who gains from the other proposals in his plan.

Double the child tax credit and raise income limit to \$200,000. Biggest winners: People earning between \$100,000 and \$200,000.

Eliminate estate tax. Winners: People who inherit estates worth more than \$1 million. Everyone else is unaffected.

Raise from \$500 to \$5,000 the amount a person can put in tax-free “education savings accounts.” Winners: People wealthy enough to pay \$5,000 a year toward schooling for their children.

Eliminate the “earnings limit” for Social Security. Winners: Social Security beneficiaries between 65 and 69 with other sources of income.

Another provision of the tax plan would make permanent the research and development tax credit for businesses. This provision gives businesses tax breaks for doing what they would be doing anyway in order to stay in business.

The Bush tax plan also relies on economic assumptions somewhat rosier than those made by the Congressional

Budget Office, which estimated an after-inflation growth rate of 2.3 percent over the next decade. The Bush plan projects a 2.7 percent growth rate.

Critics say Bush’s package is just as flawed as the tax plan passed by Congress last year and vetoed by President Clinton. They warn that Bush’s plan will needlessly jeopardize the future of Social Security and Medicare simply to provide tax cuts for wealthy Americans.

“In terms of who benefits the most, George W. Bush’s tax plan looks remarkably like the \$800 billion tax cut plan passed by Congress last summer and vetoed by President Clinton,” said Robert S. McIntyre, director of Citizens for Tax Justice. “The biggest difference is that the Bush plan is even more irresponsible, since it would cost twice as much.”

Who Benefits from George W. Bush’s Tax Plan

(Annual effects at 1999 income levels)

Income Group	Income Range	Average Income	Average Tax Cut	% of Total
Lowest 20%	less than \$13,300	\$ 8,400	\$ - 43	0.6%
Second 20%	\$13,300 – 23,800	18,300	- 203	3.0%
Middle 20%	\$23,800 – 38,200	30,300	- 501	7.4%
Fourth 20%	\$38,200 – 62,800	49,100	- 1,043	15.4%
Next 15%	\$62,800 – 124,000	83,600	- 1,906	21.1%
Next 4%	\$124,000 – 301,000	173,000	- 5,337	15.7%
Top 1%	\$301,000 or more	837,000	- 50,166	36.9%
ALL		\$48,700	\$ - 1,348	100.0%
Bottom 60%	\$38,200 and below	\$19,000	\$ - 249	11.0%
Top 10%	\$89,000 and above	204,000	- 8,362	61.6%

SOURCE: Citizens for Tax Justice, based on the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy Tax Model. This analysis does not include Bush’s proposal to increase the annual contribution limit for Education Savings Accounts.

Corporate tax breaks

Continued from page 8

business men and women's eating, drinking, and entertainment would seem to be very near, if not at, the bottom of the list. So how can we possibly justify higher taxes on the general public or reductions in important government services to fund such a peculiar entitlement program?

How tax subsidies hurt you

YOU MAY BELIEVE these tax breaks for corporations don't affect you, but they do. The Citizens for Tax Justice estimates that over the seven-year period from 1994 to 2001, business meals and entertainment write-offs alone cost the U.S. Treasury \$44 billion. "Budgeting is about making choices," explains Citizens for Tax Justice Executive Director Robert McIntyre in a report on corporate welfare. "If Congress decides to spend \$44 billion to subsidize fancy dinners and playoff tickets for business executives, that's \$44 billion that is unavailable to pay for school lunches or foodstamps. If \$95 billion is budgeted to help multinational corporations avoid taxes, that's \$95 billion that can't be used to improve education or improve law enforcement."

In some cases, business subsidies can be so large that they cause large economic shifts. That was the case from 1981 to 1986 in the real estate industry, where lavish tax subsidies caused a huge wave of excess office construction around the country. In a 1991 letter, the Treasury Department called this gross overbuilding "one of the primary causes of the savings and loan crisis."

Why corporations pay less

TO THOSE FAMILIAR with how Washington works, it should come as no surprise that corporations get enormous tax breaks. They get them the old fashioned way: they buy them.

In the 1997-98 campaign cycle, wealthy individuals and corporations donated more than \$175 million in soft money to political parties in addition to the hundreds of millions of dollars that corporate PACs and wealthy individuals donated directly to candidates.

George W. Bush has already collected over \$67 million for his presidential campaign from corporation executives and other wealthy backers. Wealthy executives of the Microsoft Corporation, now being sued by the Justice Department for monopolistic restraint of trade, are among Bush's top donors.

But corporations don't just donate money and hope candidates will support their positions. They also spend hundreds of millions on lobbyists each year. The Federal Election Commission reports that corporations spent over \$620 million on lobbyists in 1998 alone.

In *Washington on \$10 Million a Day*, investigative reporter Ken Silverstein estimates there are as many as 80,000 lobbyists working in Washington on any given work day – that's about 150 lobbyists for every member of Congress. Many corporations regularly spend more than a million dollars a year on lobbyists.

And it pays off. For example, in 1996, Boeing paid 70 lobbyists a total of \$5.2 million. No doubt those lobbyists were instrumental in helping Boeing get such a great tax deal that year. For 1995, Boeing not only did not pay any federal taxes, they got a \$33 million rebate from the U.S. Treasury, making their effective tax rate an astonishing minus nine percent.

Apparently, lobbying pays excellent dividends. □

Study says low wages mean no insurance and poor health

ACCORDING TO AN article in *Business & Health*, some 43 million working-age adults have no health insurance or endure significant gaps in coverage, yet most of them work full-time or are married to someone with a full-time job.

A new Commonwealth Fund survey shows that workers making less than \$35,000 a year are more likely not to have health care than better-paid workers. And the fund's 1999 *National Survey of Workers' Health Insurance* shows that Americans earning less than \$20,000 are almost five times more likely to be in fair or poor health than those with incomes above \$35,000.

Simply said – the less you earn, the more likely it is that you'll get sick and stay sick.

This survey establishes a positive correlation between low wages and ill health. When workers don't have the money (due to low wages) or health insurance (most low-wage jobs do not offer benefits), the result is fair or poor health.

One-fifth of American workers do not get insurance from their employer, either because it isn't offered, or because they haven't been on the job long enough. Income level plays a key role in whether or not insurance is an option, with workers making less than \$20,000 a year most likely not to have health care coverage.

Adding to the dilemma of poverty – poor diet and an unhealthy environment – is the low-wage earner's inability to afford healthcare. People who do not receive regular medical checkups and care when needed soon fall prey to chronic illness.

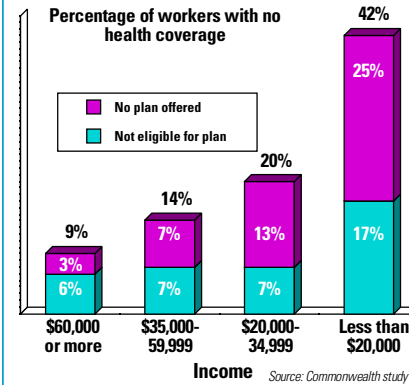
This trend leaves its worst mark on children. One-fifth of the nation's children live in poverty, making them more likely to grow up without proper medical attention. Illnesses that could be cured and medical conditions that should be monitored go untreated, causing poor children to carry their health problems into adult life.

Allowing childhood illnesses to become lifelong health problems is hardly a cost-effective way to manage health care, yet presidential candidates continue to tell the public that our nation cannot afford a national health care plan.

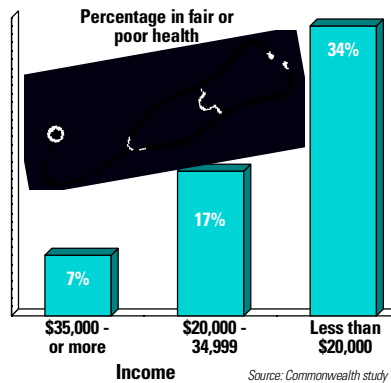
George W. Bush, Pat Buchanan, and John McCain all strongly oppose any kind of national health care that guarantees everyone access to medical care. Bush and McCain believe in using tax breaks to encourage expansion of the current system.

Vice President Al Gore speaks of reducing drug prices and passing the "patient bill of rights," a law that would make it easier for patients to deal with their HMOs. He does not address the problem of people with no access to medical care of any kind. Alone among the candidates, Bill Bradley has proposed a very modest health care plan, very similar to what George Bush proposed in 1992. It addresses the need to expand coverage, but tries to stay within the current system. □

Health insurance isn't an option



Lower wages = poorer health



The economy couldn't be better, yet corporate layoffs are soaring

Stock prices are skyrocketing, profits are up, yet more workers than ever are getting the boot

DESPITE WIDESPREAD FEARS of Y2K problems and a brief hysteria regarding holiday terrorism, last year's Christmas shopping season was nothing short of sensational for U.S. retailers. As early as two weeks before Christmas, retail analyst Steve Kemkrait said, "There is every likelihood that December will be a great month and will go down in the record books as one of the best Christmases ever."

Sales were expected to top \$180 billion, a six percent gain over 1998. "We're seeing a tremendous amount of increase in traffic over last year," says Eileen Lee, who manages an Old Navy clothing store.

The booming U.S. economy was no doubt one reason sales went so well. Shopper Sharon Webber said trips to the mall have "been fun this year because everyone seems happier." And happy shoppers spend money, driving retail sales off the charts.

Meanwhile, it's been the best of times, period, on Wall Street this year, CBS News Correspondent Anthony Mason reported. The Nasdaq hit new

highs, and those who work in the securities industry – from top money managers to lowly office staff – are licking their chops over the \$11 billion in bonuses Wall Street handed out, up 25 percent over last year. Top executives took home as much as \$7 million each.

Lower level employees on Wall Street cashed in, too. Junior level technical people and back office support people were reported to have gotten bonuses of anywhere from \$60,000 to several hundred thousand dollars, according to Gary Goldstein, CEO Headway Corporate Resources.

Ordinary workers didn't get invited to the party

ALL THIS MONEY changing hands in such a short time belies the truth of the U.S. economy. The average worker – the middle-class family person with an ordinary job, whether blue-collar, white-collar, or no-collar – is not much better off than last year.

The average wage went up just over three percent; inflation went up just over two percent. So the average per-

son saw only a very small gain during 1999 – so small that many of them probably didn't even notice it.

And 1999 was not a good year at all for the hundreds of thousands of people laid off. Corporate layoffs exceeded 630,450 by November 1999, on their way toward a new record high.

Even as retailers cheered their record sales, they laid off 61,684 workers, nearly three times as many as in 1998.

Those computer companies that were creating the booming stock market laid off nearly 60,000, and financial services, considered another boom industry for 1999 and the foreseeable future, laid off more than 56,000.

All this record job-cutting comes at a time when the country is enjoying one of the lowest unemployment rates of the past 50 years. Mergers and acquisitions are part of the problem – but only a small part. Analysts report that only one in nine layoffs is due to mergers.

In another bit of bad news, the October trade deficit jumped to a record \$25.94 billion, caused partly by soaring deficits with Japan and China. Economists agree that the U.S. cannot afford to continue such a high trade deficit, yet the White House recently completed another deal opening the way for more imports from China. □

Boilermakers do whatever it takes to get the job done

THE U.S. ARMY is not the only group to do more before 9:00 a.m. than most people do all day, according to Marvys Boswell, chairman of trustees for Local 199, Jacksonville, Fla.

He sent this photo of Tony Walker (also of Local 199) wrestling an alligator at the Purdom Power Plant in Florida as proof.

The nearly five-foot gator showed up at 7 a.m. one Monday morning following a weekend of heavy rain, but the job did not call for his particular skills. Walker and fellow Local 199 Boilermaker Jimmy Jameson escorted the reptile off the property.

Superintendent Steve Cantrell quickly took this photograph before the gator was released into the St. Marks River, pointed upstream toward the state's capital building just 20 miles away in Tallahassee. □



Daughter of Local 29 member kills moose on first hunting trip

RANDI FOURNIER, 13-year old daughter of Mel Fournier, a 27-year member of Local 29, Boston, will never forget her first hunting trip with her father this last October.

She shot a 510-pound bull moose.

Randi, pictured here with her father and the moose, is also an avid hockey player, currently enjoying her eighth season of play. □



Social Security regular retirement age goes up

1983 law raises age by steps to 67 in 2027

IF YOU'RE COUNTING on Social Security or a Railroad Pension for retirement income, you may need to work past 65. A 1983 law goes into effect this year for those people born in 1938 and later.

If you turn 62 years of age in the year 2000, and choose to collect Social Security's early-retirement benefit, the benefit amount will be slightly less than in the past. If you were born in 1938, and decide to wait to retire until you are eligible for full Social Security retirement benefits, you will have to work two months longer - until you are 65 years and two months old.

And that's not all. Under the 1983 law, the traditional retirement age of 65 will rise in increments to the age of 67 by the year 2027.

The increase is necessary because people are living significantly longer now. Since the Social Security program began paying monthly benefits in 1940, the average life expectancy for men reaching age 65 has increased from 77 years to 81; the life expectancy for women who reach 65 has increased from 78 to age 84.

Full retirement age is the earliest age at which a retiree can receive full benefits, with no reduction for early retirement. The full retirement age for Social Security employee benefits increases from 65 to 66 and then from 66 to 67 at the rate of two months per year over two separate six-year periods, beginning this year. The increase in the retirement age begins with indi-

viduals born in 1938, whose retirement age will be 65 and two months. The age increases in two-month increments for workers born between 1939 and 1943 until the retirement age reaches 66. It remains there for all workers born through 1954.

For those born after 1954, the retirement age begins to increase again in two-month increments until it reaches age 67 for those born in 1960 or later. In the chart below, locate the year of your birth to determine how old you must be to retire with full benefits under the Social Security program. This same chart applies to participants of the Railroad Retirement program, with the exception of participants with 30 years or more of service who can still retire at full benefits at age 62.

Participants in the Boilermaker-Blacksmith National Pension Trust can retire with full benefits from the Boilermaker pension at the age of 59 with 30 years of service.

Age Needed to Qualify for Full Social Security Retirement Benefits

Birth Year	Required Age
1937 or earlier	65 years
1938	65 and 2 months
1939	65 and 4 months
1940	65 and 6 months
1941	65 and 8 months
1942	65 and 10 months
1943 thru 1954	66 years
1955	66 and 2 months
1956	66 and 4 months
1957	66 and 6 months
1958	66 and 8 months
1959	66 and 10 months
1960 or later	67 years

L-40 retiree Stanley Combs is working as a fundraiser for WWII memorial

Wants all Boilermakers to help support monument

STANLEY D. COMBS joined the Boilermakers union in 1950, and has been a member of Local 40, Elizabethtown, Ky., since 1960. He is a veteran, having served in both World War II and the Korean War, and is recipient of the Purple Heart, Combat Infantry Badge, and the Silver Star.

Since his retirement in 1989, Combs has kept himself busy, but his most recent project is one of his most fulfilling. He is helping to raise funds for a World War II Memorial.

"Fifty-four years after the ending of World War II, our Congress has

authorized the building of a memorial dedicated to the veterans of this war," wrote Combs. "Let us be mindful that after 405,399 deaths and the wounding of 670,846 veterans, freedom still rings in this nation!"

Combs' fundraising efforts so far have included addressing groups and submitting articles for publication in his local newspaper. A nationwide fundraising campaign has raised \$60 million of the proposed monument's price of \$100 million. Combs wants all Boilermakers to join him in raising funds for this monument. Tax-deductible donations can be sent to the World War II Memorial, P O Box 96766, Washington, DC 20090-6766. For more information, call 1-800-639-4WW2. □

L-647's Jude Reilly is new safety director for North Dakota

Three Local 647 members make 'final four' in selection process

JUDE M. REILLY, a 15-year member of Local 647, Minneapolis, Minn., has been hired as safety director for the North Dakota Building Trades Department.

In this newly-created position, Reilly will oversee OSHA, risk management, and any other related safety training for all trades in the state of North Dakota.

Of the ten applicants for this new position, three of the four finalists inter-

viewed were members of Local 647. Also considered were Local 647 members Randy Thompson and Tom Will.

"This shows just how much Boilermakers stand out in the construction industry," said Local 647 ABM Terry Curl. "I want to thank all three Local 647 members for their intrust in this position. With Jude's background, I know he will do an excellent job."

Reilly began his new duties in September. His position is being funded by a grant awarded by the state through the workman's compensation office. □

Local lodges announce pin recipients

Local One (Chicago, Ill.) presents membership pins

John Gibson, Walter Jagielski, James J. O'Donnell, Howard Shaffer III

JOHN J. SKERMONT, business manager and secretary-treasurer of Local One, Chicago, Ill., has presented membership pins for continuous years of service to the following Local One members:

50 year pins - John Brady

45 year pins - Richard Bartos, William Segiet

35 year pins - John Benz

30 year pins - Charles Caffrey Jr., Gary Collins, Daniel Durkovic, Humberto Gonzalez, Michael Grana, James Hess, Frank Latuszek, Jerry Litherland, Michael Roos

25 year pins - Gary Ames, Daniel Bastick, Richard Carlson, Roy DiNovo, Robert Eisenhammer, Ernest Gossett, Charles Hayes, Theodore Heda, Barry Jeleniewski, James Kirby, Robert Knowles, Alvin Lewis, William Morrin, Lawrence Nolan, Emil Priesol Jr., and Fred Pomis

Local 28 (Newark, NJ) presents membership pins

RAYMOND C. DEVANEY, business manager and secretary-treasurer of Local 28, Newark, N.J., has presented membership pins for continuous years of service to the following Local 28 members:

55 year pins - Louis Lodico, Harvey Stauch

50 year pins - Donald Munroe, William Potter, Peter Richardson Jr.,

40 year pins - James Ciriello, Joseph McNally

35 year pins - Anthony DeGulis Jr., George Franklin Jr., Daniel Gallagher,

John Gibson, Walter Jagielski, James J. O'Donnell, Howard Shaffer III

30 year pins - Winford Brereton, Francis R. Burns, William Duffy, Robert Flynn, Robert Pierce, James J. Rielly, William Stevens, Michael Wasko, Edgar Youngling

25 year pins - Howard Anderson, Robert P. Boddingham, Roger Bott, Peter Centuolo, James J. Clifford, John Doherty, William Fersch, Thomas Kayla, Stephen Lawskowski, Charles Pero, William Robinson, Robert Sweiderk

20 year pins - Anthony Amormino, John Christopher, Ronald Connors Jr., Robert Crosby, Thomas Cushing, Jaime DaCunha, Robert Falck, John D. Gomez, Craig Hagendoorn, Brian Hall, Joseph Haney, Daniel Kearney Jr., Craig MacDonald, James McLean, Michael P. O'Donnell, John O'Halloran, William Potter, Michael Raymond, Charles Riegg, Michael Scanlon, Richard Sheldrake, Raymond Sheridan, Scott VanWagner, Brian Verge

15 year pins - Daniel Aumack, Donald Callahan, Lewis L. DePietro Jr., Philip J. Duffy, Robert McCarthy

Local 374 (Hammond, Ind.) presents membership pins

CHARLES H. VANOVER, business manager and secretary-treasurer of Local 374, Hammond, Ind., has presented membership pins for continuous years of service to the following Local 374 members:

60 year pin - Charles Livengood

40 year pins - Frank G. Dudek, Darwin Harrison, and Richard C. Livengood. □

Grievance Handling

How to interpret contract language

Figuring out what the contract actually says is not always easy

SOMETIMES STEWARDS feel that they need a law degree to do their jobs correctly. That's because the key to success in most grievances lies in being able to interpret what the contract says.

And that can sometimes be very difficult.

You don't need to be a lawyer, though, to interpret your collective bargaining agreement. You just need to learn some of the methods lawyers and arbitrators use to interpret the contract and how it applies to the grievance you are handling.

First, you'll want to see if this subject has come up in other grievances and, if so, how the matter was handled in the past. Generally, the resolution of a prior grievance on the same matter will determine how you'll resolve this grievance.

If the issue hasn't been addressed before, you need to determine whether it is mentioned in the contract, either directly or by reference to another document. If so, your job of interpreting begins.

Does the contract mention the issue specifically?

IF THE CONTRACT never mentions the issue of your grievance at all, then you obviously have to find some other support for the grievance. If the issue is mentioned, read that section of the contract carefully to see if the issue is specifically mentioned and the language is clear and unambiguous.

For example, look at this language: "Section 1: Management shall continue to make reasonable provisions for the safety and health of employees."

This language mentions the company's responsibility for safety and health, but leaves a lot of room for interpretation. You might not say it is unclear, but it certainly leaves a lot of room for different interpretations. Key words in this language are "continue to make" and "reasonable provisions."

Let's say that the company decides to stop supplying the work gloves it has supplied in the past. Obviously, they are not "continuing" to make provisions, so that specific word may support a grievance. On the other hand, you would probably not be able to use this section to force the company to begin distributing safety equipment that they have not distributed in the past.

This section also contains a dangerous hedge word: "reasonable." Supplying safety goggles might seem like a "reasonable" provision to you, but the company may be able to successfully argue that it is unreasonable to expect them to provide such personal items.


Do you know a star steward?

WE'D LIKE TO include their name in our *Star Stewards* column. Just drop us a line with the name of the steward, the local, the company, and a few words about why you think this steward is so special. Send a photo if you have one. We'd like the world to see what a good steward looks like.

Send info to this address:


Star Stewards
The Boilermaker Reporter
Boilermakers International
753 State Ave, Suite 570
Kansas City KS 66101

Key points to grievance handling




Listen

What facts can the aggrieved employee supply?




Check

What facts need checking?



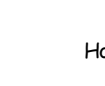
Grievance?

Does it meet the criteria for a grievance?




Write

What should be included in the written grievance?



Present

How is the best way to present the case?



Let's add another section to that contract.

"Section 2: Wearing apparel to properly protect employees from injury shall be provided by management in accordance with practices now prevailing or as such practices may be improved from time to time."

The language here is much more specific. When one part of a contract is general or vague and another is specific, the more specific part applies. Work gloves would definitely fall under "wearing apparel;" safety goggles might not.

The phrase "in accordance with practices now prevailing" is more specific than "continue to make," while the phrase "or as such practices may be improved" allows the company to change the policy by improving it. If providing the safety goggles was the "prevailing" practice when the contract was signed, the company can only change that policy by doing something better.

Of course, we don't always agree on how a practice "may be improved." If the company can save money by offering cheaper gloves, they'll call that an improvement because it improves their bottom line. What happens if your members don't like the new gloves? Do you have a grievance? How would you argue your case?

Another point to remember is that when the contract mentions one item, but fails to mention another similar item, the contract is usually interpreted to mean that the unmentioned items were intended to be excluded. In the example above, the language mentions "wearing apparel." Would you interpret that to mean work boots? What about safety glasses?

Is the language clear and unambiguous?

DETERMINING WHETHER the contract clearly states what was intended can be very frustrating. In a dispute, each side is inclined to make a clause mean what they want it to mean. When the company interprets a clause to mean one thing and you think it means something else, you need to make an effort to look at the language objectively.

Try to read the clause the way some stranger who knows nothing about the case and has no interest in it would read the language. Essentially, that's what happens when the arbitrator comes in. The arbitrator has nothing to gain or lose, so he or she can be objective.

Look at this language: "Shift workers will be given 20 minutes from their reg-

ular shift for eating lunch, at the convenience of the management." It seems pretty clear. But would it apply to people who work only days?

Ambiguous language is the type of unclear language that can be understood two different ways and both readings are reasonable. For example, "Employees must report any absence for illness or injury prior to the beginning of their shift" is ambiguous. The company would no doubt say it means you need to call in every day you will be out, but it is reasonable to read it as meaning you could call in once for a multiple day absence.

An arbitrator will consider several factors when interpreting language that is unclear or ambiguous.

1. What was the intent of the parties when they negotiated? Courts have consistently ruled that what the parties believed they were agreeing to overrules a strict reading of the actual language. If you intend to use this factor to interpret the language, you'll need to look back at the bargaining committee's notes, initial demands, how the language differs from previous contracts, and other documents relating to what people were thinking while at the negotiating table.

2. Does one interpretation deprive a worker of other contract rights? The arbitrator will disregard any interpretation of the contract that would break a law or violate a worker's civil rights.

3. Has either party permitted a certain interpretation over a period of time without protest or appeal? This criterion can work for both the company and the worker. If you let the company get away with using their interpretation of the language for several years before anyone files a grievance, don't expect the arbitrator to take your side.

4. What has been the company's past practice in similar situations? What is normal practice in the industry?

5. Would one interpretation bring harsh or nonsensical results? Arbitrators opt for resolutions they believe will bring just and reasonable results. For example, if the contract reads, "workers must call in sick every day of an absence for illness or injury," it would be harsh and unreasonable to expect a person in a coma to call in sick every day.

6. If two interpretations of the language seem equally reasonable, the arbitrator will probably not assess a penalty. □

Key words and phrases in contracts

MANY WORDS AND phrases that frequently appear in contracts can cause problems for people when they first begin interpreting contract language. You may use these terms in different ways in your everyday life, but they have very specific meanings when they appear in a contract.

• **May** – Implies permission, but not obligation. Something can be done if the party wants to do it, but they are not required to do so. For example, "The company may provide a holiday turkey in December." If you don't get one, you have no grievance.

• **Should** – Expresses moral obligation, but not legal obligation. "The company should provide a holiday turkey in December." Again, don't count on getting one.

• **Shall** – Denotes compulsion. The party is obligated to act. "The company shall provide each employee a holiday turkey in December." This one you can take home and cook. If you don't get it, you've got a grievance.

• **Will** – Simply denotes the future. Does not imply compulsion. This verb confuses a lot of people. If you want to make sure the company does something, use "shall" or "must," not "will."

• **Must** – Implies necessity or compulsion. Stronger than shall. "Employees must call in prior to an absence for illness or injury." If you're going to stay out sick, you are obligated to call in first.

• **When (or if) appropriate** – Allows full discretion to management. "When appropriate, the company may reassign employees to jobs in a similar pay class." In this case, the company decides where you work. Though you may argue over whether the pay is truly "similar," the company can reassign you whenever they feel it is appropriate.

• **When (or if) practical** – Slightly more compelling than "when appropriate." The union can argue whether something is practical. "When practical, employees may take their breaks outside so they can smoke." In this example, there is a great deal of room for arguing either way.

• **When (or if) practicable** – Means when "workable." Management decides what is workable, so the decision still belongs to them, but there may be room for discussion.

• **When (or if) possible** – Very compelling. The only argument for inaction is that it is not possible to do so – a very difficult case to support. "When possible, the company will notify employees 14 days prior to any layoff." Could the company argue it was impossible for them to see the layoff coming?

• **Normally** – Allows management to decide when a situation is other than normal. Arguments challenging what is "normal" require a great deal of documentation with evidence over a long period of time.

• **To the maximum extent practical** – Management decides whether an action is practical, so they determine the limit here.

• **To the maximum extent possible** – How much is possible? A lot! You'd better hope this phrase is part of a sentence obligating the company to do something – and not you.

New contract summaries

A brief listing of recent agreements signed and ratified by Boilermaker local lodges

M10—Milwaukee, WI

INTL. REP. HOWARD COLE reports contract ratification, effective November 1, 1999 to October 31, 2002, for 96 members of Local M10, Milwaukee, Wis., who make a variety of metal polishing products for SK Williams.

M13—St. Louis, MO

PATRICIA THOMAS, bus. mgr. of Local M13, St. Louis, Mo., reports contract ratification effective November 29, 1999 to November 28, 2002, for five Local M13 members who work at the Diamond Plating Co.

S20—Louisville, KY

DAVID CHESHIRE, sec.-treas. and rec. sec. of Local S20, Louisville, Ky., reports contract ratification, effective December 8, 1998 to December 8, 2002, for 88 Local S20 members who make gas heating equipment under the "Cozy" furnace brand name for Louisville Tin & Stove.

L-29—Boston, MA

LAWRENCE H. MACADAMS, BM-ST for Local 29, Boston, Mass., reports contract ratification, effective November 1, 1999 to October 31, 2002, for 20 Local 29 members who perform specialty welding at Hodge Engineering and Fabrication.

L-83—Kansas City, MO

ROGER ERICKSON, BM-ST for Local 83, Kansas City, Mo., reports contract ratification effective November 24, 1999 to October 31, 2003, for 97 Local 83 members who manufacture boilers and appurtenances at the Nebraska Boiler Co., and effective November 1, 1999 to October 31, 2000, for 23 shop and field repair Local 83 members who perform custom fabrication of steel, aluminum, and stainless steel for ASME code vessels, and service process and heating boilers for Shamrod Metal Fabricators.

L-101—Denver, CO

HENRY McCOY, BM-ST for Local 101, Denver, Colo., reports contract ratification, effective June 1, 1999 to October 20, 2002, for 26 members of Local 101 who produce rubber lining for the Ardco Corporation.

L-104—Seattle, WA

BM-ST TIM CARR and VP Chuck Hughes, of Local 104, Seattle, Wash., report a contract extension to August 31, 2000, for Local 104 members at A & W Fabrication; contract ratification effective October 18, 1999 to October 3, 2004, for 30 Local 104 members who produce stainless and copper pipe and fittings for the Alaskan Copper Works

Stainless Products Division; recognition and contract ratification effective November 8, 1999 to October 31, 2002, for three new Local 104 members who work in the fabrication shop at Applied Mechanical Technology; and contract ratification effective August 1, 1999 to July 31, 2002, for 500 Local 104 members who work at Todd Shipyards.

L-483—Alton, IL

MEMBERS OF Local 483, Alton, Ill., have agreed to extend all terms and conditions of the current contract with Roney Machine Works, Inc. to February 1, 2001.

L-613—Wilmington, NC

INTL. REP. STEVEN BEAL reports contract ratification, effective November 1, 1999 to October 31, 2003, for 14 members of Local 613, Wilmington, N.C., who recycle metal at Southern Metals Recycling, Inc.

L-647—Minneapolis

PAUL PENDERGAST, BM-ST for Local 647, Minneapolis, Minn., reports contract ratification, effective July 19, 1999 to July 18, 2002, for 31 Local 647 members who build and repair tanks, and perform heat exchanger work, duct fabrication, boiler tube bending, and plate roll and bending at the Moorhead Machine & Boiler Co.

L-679—Chattanooga

INTL. REP. MIKE WILSON reports contract ratification, effective Sept. 1, 1999 to Aug. 31, 2002, for 41 members of Local 679, Chattanooga, Tenn., who produce boilers and tanks for the Chattanooga Boiler and Tank Company.

L-1600—St. Charles, IL

INTL. REP. HOWARD COLE reports contract ratification, effective November 14, 1999 to November 15, 2002, for 20 members of Local 1600, St. Charles, Ill., who produce forgings for C & F Forge, and effective November 21, 1999 to November 20, 2002, for 62 Local 1600 members who make explosive powder, paint pigment, packaging, Hershey candy wrapper, and labels for Barq's beer at Toyal America, Inc.

L-1626—Champaign

INTL. REP. JAMES PRESSLEY reports contract ratification, effective October 30, 1999 to September 22, 2003, for 43 members of Local 1626, Champaign, Ill., who perform fabrication work at the Clifford Jacobs Forging Co.

L-1667—Marion, OH

INTL. REP. RON LYON reports a one-year contract extension for members of Local 1667, Marion, Ohio, at the Dana Corporation.

You don't get what you deserve . . .
... you get what you negotiate

UNION LEADERS, like those pictured here, work long hours to negotiate the best benefits they can for Boilermaker members.



Local M10 committee members, l. to r., Betty Farris, Juanita Austin, and Dorothy Mays, negotiated a three-year agreement for 96 Local M10 members in Milwaukee, Wis., at S.K. Williams. Austin also serves as the local's vice president.

L-2000 members win appeal

Sixty-two members at two Boilermaker shops share \$45,766 back-pay award

THANKS TO THE efforts of their union officers, 62 members of Local 2000, Chester, Pa., are sharing a monetary award of \$45,766.

Local 2000 Business Manager and Secretary-Treasurer Phillip J. Evans reports that the local filed an appeal with the U.S. Department of Labor on March 6, 1998, when they did not agree with the company's interpretation of the Service Contract Act.

According to Evans, Metro Machine of Pennsylvania thought the Service Contract Act was identical to the Davis Bacon Act, which combines benefits and wages to form a minimum wage and benefit package. The Service Contract Act, however, provides for a minimum

wage and also a minimum benefit package, each stand alone and are not added together.

"I filed an appeal when I discovered that Metro Machine was paying our shipfitters a rate which was too low," said Evans. The award compensates members working under the shipfitter classification at Metro's shop at the former Sun Ship Shipyard in Chester, Pa., and at their industrial products division at the former Erie Marine Shipyard in Erie, Pa.

It took awhile for the decision to be made (the appeal was filed 18 months before the award checks were distributed to the members), but Evans says, "We at Local 2000 are very pleased with the outcome." □

A summary analysis of these contract settlements

Prepared by the Research and Collective Bargaining Department of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers

THIS ANALYSIS of the 19 agreements outlined above is based on information provided in the Contract Summary and Transmittal Report forms, and covers approximately 2,043 employees.

Wage Increases

FIFTEEN facilities received pay increases in 1999, averaging \$0.53 per hour or four percent.

Fifteen facilities will receive pay increases in 2000, averaging \$0.46 per hour or 3.07 percent.

Fifteen facilities will receive pay increases in 2001, averaging \$0.46 per hour or three percent.

Five facilities will receive pay increases in 2002, averaging \$0.38 per hour or 3.25 percent.

One facility will receive pay increases in 2003, not enough to calculate an average.

Pension

EIGHTEEN facilities participate in some type of pension program.

There are nine facilities which participate in the Boilermaker-Blacksmith

National Pension Trust. Their contributions range from \$0.70 to \$2.18 per hour.

Average cents per hour contributions are \$1.20 for the first year, \$1.24 the second year, and \$1.28 in the third year. Those reporting a percentage contribution range from two percent to seven percent of gross income.

Seven facilities offer a 401(k) plan; four also have company-sponsored plans; one has a profit sharing plan.

Shift Differential

EIGHTEEN agreements provide for a second shift premium, of which 15 report a cents-per-hour premium that ranges from \$0.37 to \$1.00. The average is \$0.37 per hour. One agreement provides a premium for employees who work a 12-hour shift.

Seventeen agreements provide for a third-shift premium, of which 14 provide a cents-per-hour premium that ranges from \$0.12 to \$1.00. The average is \$0.41 per hour.

The remaining agreements pay on a percentage basis. These range from four to eight percent on the second shift and 4.5 to eight percent on the third shift.

Sickness & Accident

SIXTEEN agreements provide weekly sickness and accident indemnity. Of these, 12 pay a set dollar amount ranging from \$135 to \$445 per week. Average rates are: first year—\$231; second year—\$232; third year—\$238.

The remaining agreements provide a percentage of the employee's earnings.

The length of time off ranges from 13 to 52 weeks. The most common is 26 weeks found in ten agreements.

Life Insurance/AD&D

SIXTEEN agreements provide life insurance. In 13 of the agreements, there is a set dollar amount ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000. The average benefit for the first year is \$15,615.

The remaining agreements use the annual wage as the benefit or multiply wages by 2080 hours, for the benefit amount.

Thirteen agreements provide Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) insurance. All of the agreements have a set dollar amount ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000. The average is \$18,154.

Vacation

EIGHTEEN agreements provide a one-week vacation. Eighteen agreements provide a two-week vacation. Seventeen agreements provide a three-week vacation. Seventeen agreements provide a four-week vacation. Five agreements provide a five-week vacation and two agreements provide a six-week vacation.

Of the above agreements, three receive vacation pay based on a percentage.

Paid Holidays

ALL OF THE agreements provide for paid holidays. The number of paid holidays ranges from eight to 13. The average is eight.

Other Provisions

SEVENTEEN agreements provide funeral leave. Paid leave for jury duty is found in 14 agreements. Union leave language is found in eight agreements. Eight agreements provide all or partial reimbursement for the purchase of safety shoes. Two agreements provide a severance payment package, and one agreement provides paid leave for those persons who spend two weeks at military encampment each year.

L-1600 overcomes lockout



Negotiating a contract between Local 1600 and Toyal America, Inc., are, seated l. to r., L-1600 VP Mario Porras, Pers. Mgr. Nancy Williams, and CFO John Wheeler; standing, l. to r., L-1600 Trustees Greg Villagomez and Tom Fatagante, plant mgr. Michael Moore, and co. atty. Matthew Schiff. Photo by Intl. Rep. Howard Cole.

Contract settlement ends one-week lockout

THROUGH THE negotiation process, members of Local 1600, St. Charles, Ill., have ended a one-week lockout at Toyal America, earning back holiday pay, retroactive insurance coverage, and increases in both their

wage and benefit packages in a new three-year agreement. The company also responded to the members' demands by dropping their request for random drug testing, reports Intl. Rep. Howard Cole.

OSHA proposes standard

Ergonomics standard is positive step, but needs to cover all workers

ON NOV. 22, 1999, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) proposed a rule requiring employers to implement ergonomics programs for hazardous jobs, a major step forward in the fight to end crippling workplace injuries.

If approved, the regulation would be the most significant worker safety and health law of the past ten years, reflecting the tireless efforts of union members who faced down a well-financed campaign by major corporations to block ergonomics regulation. Corporate allies in Congress tried unsuccessfully to thwart workers' efforts by seeking to weaken existing safety protections, curtail safety inspections, and even prohibit the rule's development.

In the next few months, activists plan to submit written testimony and attend public hearings in support of the ergonomics standard.

"Despite an unrelenting and mean-spirited campaign by Big Business groups and anti-worker members of Congress to block these important protections, the public will finally have a chance to be heard," said AFL-CIO President John Sweeney. The rule in its final form should be expanded to cover workers in the construction, agriculture, and maritime industries, and require employers to fix hazardous jobs before workers are injured, he said.

More than six million workers have suffered serious injuries from ergonomic hazards in the nine years since the Bush administration pledged to develop an ergonomics standard. Meanwhile, the broad support of the safety and health professional community for a rule and recent state regulatory actions in California and Washington to reduce employee exposure to workplace hazards indicate that such injuries are preventable.

OSHA's publication of its proposed ergonomics program in the Federal Register Nov. 23, 1999, followed eight years of intense resistance by some employer groups and their allies in Congress. This action represents the

first step in the process of developing a final rule to control workplace hazards which cause Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs). Written comments to OSHA on the proposed standard must be post-marked by Feb. 1, 2000. To submit written comments, call 202-693-2350 for requirements, or visit OSHA's website for rules of submission at: (www.osha-slc.gov/ergonomics-standard/index.html).

Following the comment period, public hearings are scheduled in Washington, D.C., for four weeks beginning Feb. 22; Portland, Ore. (two weeks, beginning Mar. 21); and Chicago (two weeks, beginning Apr. 11), with a final rule expected by the end of 2000. A Notice of Intention to Appear at one of the public hearings must be submitted to OSHA and post-marked by Jan. 24, 2000.

After comments and hearings, Congress can still block the standards, which don't apply to construction and some other industries. Some employers have launched a campaign to prevent OSHA from taking action to protect workers against ergonomic hazards that cause these injuries. They also are moving to change state laws to make it difficult, or impossible, for injured workers to collect workers' compensation for RSIs and back injuries. These employers have formed the National Coalition on Ergonomics, an industry front group, to argue that there is no scientific basis for an ergonomics standard and to question whether RSIs are related to workplace conditions. The coalition's real strategy is to block a standard for as long as possible.

The proposed standard is a positive step forward to protect workers, but the rule needs to be expanded so all workers are covered, and strengthened to require employers to control hazardous jobs before injuries and illnesses occur. The proposed standard is written in plain language focused on six basic elements of an ergonomics program: Management Leadership and Employee Participation, Hazard Information and Reporting, Job Hazard Analysis and Control, Training, MSD Management, and Program Evaluation. For a summary, see the OSHA web site or the AFL-CIO web site: www.aflcio.org/safety/ergostd_sum.htm. □

Eating blueberries could improve balance, coordination, and memory

AN EXPERIMENT CONDUCTED at the U.S. Agriculture Department Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University in Boston reveals that eating blueberries could improve balance, coordination, and short-term memory.

According to a report in the Sept. 15 Journal of Neuroscience, rats whose age would be equivalent to that of humans 65 to 75 years of age, were fed blueberry extract equal to a daily half-cup of blueberries. After eight weeks, the rats could run faster, and walk longer on a narrow rod, thus demonstrating improved

motor skills. They could go through mazes quickly and find an underwater platform in murky water, indicating improved short-term memory.

Scientists believe that antioxidants help slow the aging process by destroying the free radicals produced by human metabolic activity. Blueberries have the strongest antioxidant source of 40 fruits and vegetables tested at the Tufts neuroscience lab; however, more scientific study needs to be done to determine whether blueberries help humans the way they do rats. (Source: AARP.) □

Protect against infection by wearing cotton treated with chlorine

YES, YOU CAN protect against infection simply by wearing cotton. Cotton that has been treated with chlorine, that is, which will kill germs in minutes without irritating the skin or releasing chemicals that could harm the environment.

Developed by the HaloSource Company of Seattle from research done at the University of California at Davis,

the antibacterial fabric will be used for sportswear, hotel bedding, handkerchiefs, and household linens, and will be available in stores early this year.

The fabric can be recharged by rinsing in dilute bleach. And since bacteria cause odor, this fabric could mean the end of smelly socks! (Source: AARP.) □

MAKE IT SAFE

Ergonomics – Stop the Pain!

REPETITIVE STRAIN INJURIES (RSIs) and back injuries are disabling and expensive. Each year, RSIs force more than 600,000 workers to lose time from their jobs, making these injuries the nation's biggest job safety problem. They account for one-third of all serious injuries and cost billions of dollars. Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) account for 34 percent of all lost workdays, and one third of all money spent on worker's compensation. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome results in more lost workdays than any other workplace injury. Women suffer 70 percent of lost workdays due to Carpal Tunnel and 62 percent of all lost workdays due to tendonitis (because of the jobs they typically perform, not their physiologies).

Avoiding back injuries

MOST BACK INJURIES result from attempting to lift heavy loads. According to an article by Cindy Burt, MS, OTR, your body is not designed to lift heavy weights. The way you carry a heavy object can subject your back to pressures two to ten times the object's actual weight. The pressure is increased more as you hold the load away from the body.

Safe lifting is a function of both the amount of weight being lifted and the lifting technique. Here are some tips to help you lift safely:

- Always test the weight of unfamiliar loads before lifting. If a load is too heavy or awkward, have a co-worker help, or use equipment such as a cart or dolly.
 - Know where you are going before you lift a load. Pre-plan your lift.
 - Keep your legs shoulder width apart for good balance.
 - Take a deep breath and tighten your stomach muscles. Conditioned stomach muscles can serve the same purpose as back straps to protect your back when lifting.
 - Bend at your knees and hips, not your waist. Try to keep the natural curves in your back when bending and lifting.
 - Lift using your leg muscles to reduce the load on your back.
 - Lift smoothly; don't jerk as you lift. Sudden movement and weight shifts can injure your back.
 - Keep your back in alignment, with your ears, shoulders, and hips lined up. Your nose and your toes should be facing the load when lifting.
 - Hold the load close to your body at waist height to reduce the force on your back.
 - Turn with your feet, not your back to avoid twisting when lifting.
- A stretching and strengthening program can also help you reduce your risk of back injury.

Avoiding repetitive trauma disorders

CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME accounts for more lost workdays than any other workplace injury. There are several forces at work that come together to result in a repetitive trauma disorder. Your work environment, your job, your equipment, and how you use your body are all important compo-

nents. Increased awareness of your posture and work habits are necessary to enable you to work safely and avoid the problems associated with repetitive trauma disorders.

What is carpal tunnel?

AT THE BASE of the palm is a tight canal or tunnel through which tendons and the Median nerve have to pass to get into the hand. This narrow passage between the forearm and hand is called the carpal tunnel.

The carpal tunnel is normally quite snug and there is just barely enough room in it for the tendons and one nerve. If anything takes up extra room in the canal, things become too tight and the nerve in the canal becomes constricted or "pinched." This pinching causes numbness and tingling in the area of the hand that the nerve goes to, resulting in the "carpal tunnel syndrome."

Repetitive use of the hand and wrist can cause tendons to swell, resulting in carpal tunnel. Fractures around the wrist and hand can also cause carpal tunnel symptoms.

The carpal tunnel also changes in size, depending on the position of the wrist. When the wrist and hand are straight in line, the carpal tunnel is at its widest size. When the hand is bent up or bent down at the wrist, the tunnel becomes slightly smaller. There is more room for the nerve when the wrist is kept straight. Keeping the wrist bent up or down puts more pressure on the nerve and brings out the numbness and tingling.

Symptoms include pain, tingling or numbness in the thumb, index, middle, and half the ring finger. These frequently wake you up at night or appear in activities such as driving or typing. If symptoms persist long enough the thumb muscles that permit you to pinch deteriorate and the ability to pinch can be lost.

If the pressure on the nerve is relieved early enough, the symptoms rapidly disappear. If they are ignored too long, the continued pressure on the nerve can cause irreversible damage.

Workers with hand-intensive jobs should do a five-minute exercise warm-up before starting work, just as runners stretch before a run to prevent injury. At the start of each shift and after each break, workers should:

1. Extend and stretch both wrists and fingers acutely as if they are in a hand-stand position. Hold for a count of five.
2. Straighten both wrists and relax fingers.
3. Make a tight fist with both hands. Then bend both wrists down while keeping the fist. Hold for a count of five.
4. Straighten both wrists and relax fingers, for a count of five.

Repeat exercise ten times, then hang arms loosely at side and shake them for a couple of seconds. Total exercise time: five to ten minutes.

**DON'T TAKE UNNECESSARY RISKS.
ALWAYS PLAY IT SAFE.
AND WHEN YOU ARE AT WORK,
MAKE IT SAFE!**

Members Only

The money-saving programs listed below are available only to Boilermaker members and their immediate families.*



UNION PLUS CREDIT CARD

A credit card is available.

For information call:
1-800-522-4000



LEGAL SERVICE

Free and discounted legal services. Includes a free consultation (up to 30 minutes).

For information call:
1-800-452-9425



LIFE INSURANCE

Term insurance is available for members; spouses and children may be included.

For information call:
1-800-899-2782



DENTAL & VISION

Offers predetermined discount fees for dental and vision services and procedures.

For information call:
1-800-257-8352



MORTGAGE & REAL ESTATE

Buying, selling, refinancing made easier, more affordable. Special savings on real estate agent services.

For information call:
1-800-848-6466



ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Workplace accidental death insurance is available.

For information call:
1-800-899-2782



UNION FAMILY SAVERS

Savings on everyday consumer products and services – including Budget & Avis car rentals, Disney World hotel stays, hearing aids, and more.

For information call:
1-800-452-9425

For more information on these members-only benefits, call

1-800-452-9425

BOILERMAKERS UNION PRIVILEGE BENEFITS

*Includes retired members. Parents and children of members and retired members with retired member cards are eligible for the mortgage program and union family savers directly; they are eligible for other programs through the Boilermaker member. Program restrictions may apply to members outside the continental United States. Phone 1-800-452-9425 for clarification of eligibility and more information on how you can apply.

Mortgage benefits for union-members only

Boilermaker members have purchased homes worth over \$12 million using this program

THANKS TO UNION Member Mortgage and Real Estate, buying or selling a home has never been easier or more affordable for union members and their immediate families. And thanks to several recent mortgage benefits enhancements, this popular program now serves members of participating unions even better.

Key program features include a \$350 credit toward closing costs, which typically covers the credit check and home appraisal. (This savings benefit is applied only in instances where the member closes a program loan and uses the program's real estate benefit to purchase the home.) Regional pricing flexibility is also available to better serve members in competitive real estate markets. And Federal Housing Administration (FHA) loans, Veteran's Administration (VA) loans, and local

bond programs are now available to members in most states.

In addition, the program features competitive rates, low down payments, and the convenience of either handling the entire mortgage process over the phone or in person (in areas where the mortgage lender has branch offices).

The program's real estate benefit, which is available by calling the same toll-free number, offers home sellers one-half of one percentage point off the commission* paid to the real estate broker. (That's an average savings of \$500 on a \$100,000 home.)

"Union Member Mortgage and Real Estate can add up to real savings for members who use all parts of the program," said Union Privilege President Charles McDonald. "If you add the mortgage benefits plus the typical \$500 savings on the real estate commission, you end up saving \$850 or more when you both buy and sell through the program. Plus, you have the convenience of handling the entire process over the phone."

Savings and convenience aren't the only benefits Union Member Mortgage and Real Estate has to offer. The pro-

gram also includes several union-members-only features such as assistance fund benefits for members who are laid off or disabled.

Of particular help to members just entering the housing market are the program's first-time buyers features. These options allow qualified applicants (including members, their parents, and their sons and daughters) to put as little as three percent down when buying a home. (The typical down payment required by many lenders is a minimum of five percent.)

"With the first-time buyers benefits, members who previously were shut out of the housing market may now be eligible for the loan they need to purchase a home," said McDonald. "Union Member Mortgage and Real Estate helps make the American dream of owning a home a reality."

Mortgage loans are made through Chase Manhattan Mortgage Corp. The union has no involvement in loan decisions. □

*The discount on the real estate commission is not available in Alaska, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and West Virginia.



Thieves get rich quick by stealing your identity

WHEN BARBARA MICKELBERRY dropped her credit card and ID card after renting a video, she didn't notice it was missing until she got a phone call from a local jewelry store. The clerk had taken a credit application that he was suspicious about, so he looked her name up in the phone book.

Her number in the phone book did not match the applicant's. His phone call confirmed his suspicions. The 20-something female in his store was not 80-year-old Barbara Mickleberry. He withheld the card and called the police.

It was lucky for Barbara that the clerk had good instincts. The jewelry company's main office had already approved a credit line of \$5,000.

Barbara came very close to becoming a victim of one of the newest and fastest growing forms of crime: identity theft.

Identity thieves do not steal from you directly. They pretend to be you, get credit cards in your name, and run up bills that can ruin your credit.

Identity theft claims more than 500,000 victims a year. In most cases, the thieves steal your Social Security Number (SSN) first. With that, they have access to all your financial and credit records.

Thieves can get your SSN by stealing your wallet, taking mail from your box, going through trash for discarded receipts and bills, or conning you into giving it to them over the phone. A thief can buy batches of SSNs from accomplices working for companies that have access to them, and they've even been sold over the Internet at \$20 each.

Once a thief has your SSN, he or she can apply for a credit card in your name. Months later, when a debt collection

agency is hired to collect the payment, they track you down. You don't have to pay the debt, but you must clean up your credit record, which means trying to get a police report and copy of the fraudulent contract, then using them to clear the fraud from your credit report.

That isn't easy to do. And a bad credit record is not the worst of it. Some victims have been denied jobs, had their drivers' licenses suspended, or even been jailed for offenses committed by an identity thief.

You can minimize your risk of identity theft in many ways:

- Never carry your SSN in your wallet or have it printed on checks.
- Guard your SSN closely, giving it out only to official authorities or businesses you trust.
- Shred documents so all numbers are unrecognizable.
- Demand that credit bureaus stop selling your credit information. Call the credit bureau's special toll-free line: (888) 567-8688.
- Don't post personal information on the Internet – for example, on genealogical or college reunion sites.
- Check your credit report annually.
- Check bank and credit statements item by item.

If you should become a victim of identity theft, here are some ways to protect yourself from further harm:

- Get a copy of the fraudulent contract or application.
- Contact the credit bureaus that hold your credit report and ask them to log the theft and remove the bad accounts from your report.
- Have a "fraud alert" put on your credit report.

- Keep meticulous dated records of your attempts to clean the record.
- Never agree to pay any portion of the debt just to get debt collectors off your back. (Once you begin paying, the debt is your responsibility. The balance can stay on your record and creditors can even collect from your estate.) □

Where to go for help

- To report identity theft and get help on how to restore your credit, contact the Federal Trade Commission, Consumer Response Center, 600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20580, or call toll free, 1-877-382-4357. For online information, contact www.consumer.gov/idtheft.
- To report ID theft, get your credit record (free for fraud victims). To have it corrected, contact all of the following:
 1. Trans Union, Fraud Victim Assistance Dept., P O Box 6790, Fullerton, CA 92834; 1-800-680-7289.
 2. Equifax, P O Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241, 1-800-525-6285.
 3. Experian, P O Box 10117, Allen, TX 75013, 1-800-301-7195.
- For law enforcement help, contact the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the U.S. Secret Service, or the police (telephone numbers are on the front page of your local phone book).
- For consumer-oriented information, contact the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, 1717 Kettner Ave., Suite 105, San Diego, CA 92101 (www.privacyrights.org).
- For a step-by-step guide on how to regain credit, see "From Victim to Victor" (Porpoise Press, 1998), written by victim and attorney, Mari J. Frank; www.identitytheft.org.
- AARP information is also online at www.aarp.org/contacts/money/identity.html.

IN MEMORIAM

WITH DEEP SORROW the International Brotherhood records the death of these members as reported to the Intl. sec.-treas.'s office and extends its heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved families.

LODGE & NAME

Table listing lodge numbers and member names: NTL Black, Allison; NTL Boatwright, R.C.; NTL Caston, Jimmy R.; NTL Francis, Edward; NTL Kline, Bradley G.; NTL Melton, Johnny; NTL O'Neal, John; 1 Carey, Raymond; 1 Carpenter, Daniel; 1 Corder, Raymond; 1 Funk, Richard H.; 1 Shimkus, Chas.; 6 Aranzas, George; 6 Wade, William N.; 7 Buckley, William; 7 Vogt, Mathew L.; 10 White, Oran B.; 13 Gorgol, John; 13 Packer, Robert; 13 Quinn, John F.

Table listing lodge numbers and member names: 146 Lacey, William P.; 148 McCart, Halsey; 154 Boerner, Alfred; 159 Fronczek, Andrew; 175 Wyman, Glen A.; 203 Flaherty, Joseph; 290 Allen, Caby; 317 Parks, Bruce B.; 363 Bain, Jackie; 374 Butler, James; 374 Delcorio, Frank; 374 Lee, Kenneth D.; 374 Moody, Roy T.; 374 Pobereyko, Peter; 374 Skrbina, Joseph J.; D375 Boroff, Robert; D375 Crawford, Albert; D375 Donley, Paul; D375 Friend, Robert; D375 Sprow, Ernest; 397 Walters, Arthur; 408 Trammell, Howard; 453 Armstrong, Carl; 453 Calbaugh, Thomas; 454 Connor, Donald; 454 Frazier Jr., Harry; 456 Mask, Moody; 455 Sea, Ford; 467 Labo, John; 483 Dickerson, Jesse; 483 Rapp, Byford F.; D500 Kowalski, Eugene; 502 Gonzales, Tomas; 502 Sears, Loren; 530 House, Harvey; 531 Folks, Joe; 577 Morton, Griff; 582 Boone, Joseph; 582 Cooper, Morris; 587 Howard, Alvorn; 592 Ellis, Roy; 592 Knox, Alvin; 614 Faioli, Carmino; 640 Malmstein, Alfred; 647 Bistodeau, Vernon; 656 Ambotis, Anthony; 656 Bean, Johnny; 656 Davis, Billy; 656 Fortner, Kenneth; 656 Gann, Wayne; 656 Mickey, Louie; 679 Johnson, William; 693 Dawkins, Rollin; 744 Finney, Charles; 744 Marso, Michael; 744 Meredith, Robert; 744 Scott, Dean; 744 Wilbur, Clair; 744 Wisnijai, Louis; 747 Petrilla, Joseph; 801 Bendorff, Herman; 908 McCaman, Dan; 1086 Lincavage, A.; 1086 Peterka, Charles; 1509 Kampa, Lawrence; 1509 Laske, John E.; 1509 Ydunate, Joe; 1570 Duquette, Olivia; 1626 Black, John; 1626 Blakeley, Harvey; 1664 Dvorak, Charles; 1934 Salb, C. N.

DEATH BENEFITS

THE DEATH BENEFIT PLAN under the Boilermaker-Blacksmith National Pension Trust has paid the beneficiaries of the following deceased members who were covered by the plan since the last issue of our publication.

LODGE, NAME & BENEFIT

Table listing lodge numbers, member names, and benefit amounts: NTL Bateman, Carle E. \$3,000.00; NTL Baughman, Merle B. 3,000.00; NTL Bordelon Sr., Laurence 3,000.00; NTL Calderon, Ramon 3,000.00; NTL Caston, Jimmy R. 6,000.00; NTL Havill, John W. 6,000.00; NTL Howell, Lloyd D. 3,000.00; NTL Kissane, Daniel J. 3,000.00; NTL Montgomery, James C. 3,000.00; NTL O'Neal, John E. 3,369.33; NTL Parker, Clarence J. 3,000.00; NTL Poland, Robert L. 3,000.00; NTL Sawdo, Roger J. 3,000.00; NTL Spinnenweber, Gerald 3,000.00; NTL Sutton, Roland R. 3,000.00; NTL Townsend, Russell O. 3,000.00; NTL Williams, Bransford 3,000.00; 1 Bryant, Gordon J. 3,000.00; 1 Koch, Joseph R. 3,000.00; 1 Ohligschlagler, Alvin 3,000.00; 1 Rodenberg, Robert 3,000.00; 1 Stepulin, John P. 3,000.00; 6 Davis, Duane O. 6,000.00; 6 Drost, Bernard E. 3,000.00; 6 Forney, Culbertson 3,000.00; 6 Fulgado, Severo M. 3,000.00; 6 Garrison, Charles H. 3,000.00; 6 Giamboni, William L. 3,000.00; 6 Johnson, Willie 3,000.00; 6 Martinez, Joe C. 3,000.00; 6 McClain, Charles W. 3,000.00; 6 Montoya, Benito 3,000.00; 6 Muldrow, Lawrence F. 3,000.00; 6 Murphy, Hoy P. 3,000.00; 6 Rhodes, Otis 3,000.00; 6 Thompson, John S. 3,000.00; 6 Wallis, Floyd B. 3,000.00; 7 Park, Robert H. 3,000.00; 7 Templeton, Robert T. 3,000.00; 7 Yavicoli, Harry 3,000.00; 13 Gilmer, James L. 3,000.00; 13 Holzworth, Adolph 3,000.00; 13 Meluskey, Benny J. 3,000.00; 26 Highsmith, Edgar 3,000.00; 26 Jordan, Robert L. 2,129.36; 26 Marzec, Zigmund B. 3,000.00; 26 Peacock, Felton 3,000.00; 26 Ponsell, George B. 3,000.00; 26 Youmans, Herman H. 3,000.00; 27 Allen, George W. 387.50; 27 Raley, Lonnie H. 3,000.00; 27 Roan, William R. 3,000.00; 27 Sanker, Charles W. 3,000.00; 28 Guinaugh, Patrick 3,000.00; 28 Moos, Milton 8,000.00; 28 Pierce, Robert E. 3,000.00; 28 Raab, Edward A. 5,000.00; 29 Giorgio, Carmen 3,000.00; 29 McAteer, John 2,000.00; 30 Morris, Cecil C. 3,000.00; 37 Bankston, Thomas A. 3,000.00; 37 Mouille, Franklin M. 3,818.19; 40 Adelman, Clifton S. 3,000.00; 40 Heilman, Timothy F. 6,000.00; 40 Waggoner, Mark A. 6,000.00; 45 Pierce, Samuel D. 131.25; 72 Bell, LeRoy H. 3,000.00; 72 Campbell, Edward M. 3,000.00; 72 Hedrick, David P. 3,000.00; 72 Hopper, W. M. 3,000.00; 72 Johnson, Jack W. 3,000.00; 72 Koivisto, Anselmi 3,000.00; 72 Lewis, Ronald H. 3,000.00; 72 Malinowski, Andrew P. 3,000.00; 72 McCollum Jr., Cecil 3,000.00; 72 Muir, Robert H. 3,000.00; 72 Stewart, William D. 3,000.00; 72 Whitman, Harold M. 3,000.00; 74 Taylor, John C. 3,000.00; 83 Becker, Joseph A. 3,000.00; 83 Ehlers, Carl G. 3,000.00; 83 Erickson, William M. 3,000.00; 83 Grant, Windeal T. 3,000.00; 83 Gray, Larry T. 3,000.00; 83 Lewis, William J. 3,000.00; 83 Peevey, Hubert D. 2,000.00; 85 Cornett Sr., Matthew 3,000.00; 85 Foster, Russell J. 3,000.00; 87 Abbott, Ernest D. 3,000.00; 92 Balliet, Lorn L. 3,000.00; 92 Coggeshall, Henry J. 3,000.00; 92 Hill, Luther C. 3,000.00; 92 Holquin, Antonio R. 3,000.00; 92 King, Wayne L. 3,000.00; 92 Ohls, Richard E. 3,000.00; 92 Underhill, Evert James 3,000.00; 92 Wilson, Ford 3,000.00; 101 Marquez, Augustine A. 3,000.00; 104 Chilcote, Robert A. 3,000.00; 104 Elsemore, Gerald S. 3,000.00; 104 George, John M. 3,000.00; 104 Johnson, Gunnar E. 3,000.00; 104 Killmer, Edward D. 3,000.00; 104 Kinerk, David B. 3,000.00; 104 Lambert, George W. 3,000.00; 104 Mills, Victor 3,000.00; 104 Pitman, Clarence L. 3,000.00; 104 Schaler, Rodney A. 3,000.00; 104 Sego, Ernest F. 3,000.00; 104 Stroncek, August E. 3,000.00; 104 Timmerman, Edward J. 3,000.00; 104 Whillock, John A. 3,000.00; 105 Hutchison, Basil T. 3,000.00; 105 Peck Jr., James A. 3,000.00; 105 Presley, Ernest H. 3,000.00; 106 Miller, Samuel T. 3,000.00; 107 Lewellyn, John R. 3,000.00; 107 Shubert, Francis T. 3,000.00; 107 Swetlik, Leonard E. 3,000.00; 112 White, James B. 6,000.00; 117 Felien, Richard Elmer 3,000.00; 117 Hunt, Glenn F. 3,000.00; 154 Ballantine, Richard C. 3,000.00; 154 Castriota, Louis J. 3,000.00; 154 Felitsky Sr., Robert W. 3,000.00; 154 Henry, James C. 3,000.00; 154 Johnson, Edward J. 3,000.00; 154 Krill, David A. 3,000.00; 169 Usher Sr., Richard H. 3,000.00; 169 Zink Jr., Joseph John 3,000.00; 177 LeCloux, Robert J. 3,000.00; 182 Walden, George L. 3,000.00; 197 Giminianna, Robert N. 3,000.00; 242 James, Earl L. 3,000.00; 263 Spears, Edward O. 3,000.00; 300 Mack, Cecil 3,000.00; 300 McLean, Arthur J. 3,000.00; 316 Jackson, Henry 1,500.00; 316 Reidy, Jeremiah 3,000.00; 358 Holmes, Jeff 3,000.00; 363 Bain, Jackie W. 3,000.00; 363 Martin, Thomas O. 3,000.00; 374 Gray, Franklin V. 3,000.00; 374 Kurosker, William J. 3,000.00; 374 McIntyre, Wayne 1,500.00; 374 Parks, John 3,000.00; 374 Pobereyko, Peter 3,000.00; 374 Williams, Van W. 3,000.00; 433 Blanton, Zoya A. 3,000.00; 433 Chastain, Kenneth M. 1,793.63; 433 Kelley Jr., Stephen A. 3,000.00; 433 Muckleroy, William B. 3,000.00; 433 Post, Earl N. 3,000.00; 433 Scaffa, William L. 3,000.00; 433 Wilder, Elmer L. 3,000.00; 454 Coble Jr., William R. 3,000.00; 454 Vaughn, Jerald T. 3,000.00; 455 Allen, Larry S. 3,000.00; 469 Miller, Broadus S. 3,000.00; 500 Benedetti, Charles N. 3,000.00; 513 Cariker, Henry C. 3,000.00; 518 Price, Raymond L. 3,000.00; 549 Aweeka, George A. 600.00; 549 Phillips, Sam 3,000.00; 568 Miller, Allan G. 3,000.00; 582 Rish, James D. 3,000.00; 582 Temple, Robert 3,000.00; 583 Davis, Herbert H. 3,000.00; 583 Holdbrooks, James B. 3,000.00; 583 Smith, Elmo R. 3,000.00; 587 Holder, Francis C. 3,000.00; 587 Morgan, John E. 3,000.00; 592 Bryan, Allen 3,000.00; 627 Gamett Sr., Harold R. 3,000.00; 627 Stressman, James L. 6,000.00; 636 MacQuarrie, Robert R. 3,000.00; 636 Riddle, Clarence F. 3,000.00; 647 Lemler Jr., Earl H. 3,000.00; 647 Lowell, Kenneth E. 3,000.00; 647 Martindale, Marvin W. 3,000.00; 647 Moore, Edwin M. 3,000.00; 647 Richards, Dan 3,000.00; 647 Watson, Wendell L. 3,000.00; 651 Shipalowski, John D. 3,000.00; 667 Fyffe, Roy E. 3,000.00; 667 Goff, Oran D. 3,000.00; 696 Denowski, Anthony E. 3,000.00; 700 Murphy, James R. 3,000.00; 744 Burnham, Leonard 3,000.00; 744 Lowery, James W. 3,000.00; 744 Ryglewicz, Stanley M. 3,000.00; 744 Van Valien, William H. 3,000.00; 752 McDonagh, Gerald F. 3,000.00; 802 Buchan, Charles W. 3,000.00; 802 Lanholm, Carl 3,000.00; 802 McKee, William James 3,000.00; 802 Walters, Paul E. 3,000.00; 807 Tanner, Rudolph M. 3,000.00; 1086 Benamon, Virgil L. 3,000.00; 1162 Jordan, Rodney D. 727.49; 1162 Sobolik, Walter M. 3,000.00; 1234 Ortiz, Luz M. 3,000.00; 1247 Cooper, Isaac 3,000.00; 1509 Eaton, Patrick J. 3,000.00; 1509 Fleischman, Joseph B. 3,000.00; 1509 Grocholski, Harry J. 3,000.00; 1509 Kitzman, Gordon K. 3,000.00; 1509 Liska, Charles A. 3,000.00; 1637 Day, William 3,000.00; 1670 McDonald, Ray 3,000.00; 1670 Roth, Chaim 3,000.00; 2000 Davis, Thomas 1,463.00

IF YOU HAVE NOT yet been furnished this information, contact your local lodge, secure the beneficiary forms, complete the required information and forward to the Administrative Office of the Pension Fund, 754 Minnesota Avenue, Suite 522, Kansas City, KS 66101, at the earliest possible date. NOTE: These additional death benefits can only be derived for members who worked under a collective bargaining agreement with an employer contributing to the Boilermaker-Blacksmith National Pension Trust.

Moving? Tell us where...

Mail form to:

Name _____
New Address _____
City _____
State or Province _____ Zip _____
Local Lodge No. _____ Register No. _____
(Also please notify the secretary of your local lodge.)

Publications Department
753 State Avenue, Suite 565
Kansas City, KS 66101
(Allow five weeks for change of address.)

We need to make our government spend our tax money more wisely

THE NATIONAL Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) had it pretty rough last fall. In September they lost the Mars Climate Orbiter, a satellite that was supposed to study the atmosphere of Mars. Then in December, they lost its mate, the Mars Polar Lander, which was supposed to land near the south pole of Mars and study the polar surface.

NASA's goal for these shots was to determine whether there has ever been enough water on the surface of Mars to support life. Together, these failed launches cost a total of \$356.5 million.

Although scientists, like most people, can usually learn something from their mistakes, they would have learned a great deal more had these missions been successful. For practical purposes, that \$356.5 million was wasted money.

To Congress, a few hundred million dollars may not seem like a lot of money. It is only a small fraction of NASA's total budget of more than \$13 billion for the year.

But it is a lot of money to the rest of us, and I have to question the wisdom of the way that money is being spent. If successful, those probes would have given us a few more clues as to how much water may have been on the surface of Mars several thousand or millions of years ago.

How much is that information worth?

The Climate Orbiter and Polar Lander are only two of several missions NASA has planned for Mars. Mars probes began with the Mars Pathfinder and Global Surveyor in 1996. More missions are planned for 2001, 2003, and 2005.

I think that money could be better spent closer to where we live. Spending billions of dollars each year on space travel – the privilege of a handful of people – seems like an unnecessary luxury when the average citizen has difficulty getting to work and doing business because our roads, railroads, waterways, and skyways desperately need improvement.

In this century, air travel will grow at a phenomenal rate. It has already become the dominant mode of business transportation. According to the FAA, U.S. airlines now handle more than 600 million passengers a year. By 2015, that number is expected to top one billion.

Anyone who flies regularly knows that airports are clogged, resulting in missed flights and other delays. As air travel grows, we can expect that to worsen, unless we build more airports and expand those now in use. And without improvements to the air traffic management systems, we can expect more airplane accidents.

On Dec. 6, 1999, William Carley reported in *The Wall Street Journal* that air traffic controllers have been concealing near collisions because they

fear punishment for operational errors. Our nation has an exemplary air safety record over the last few decades, but if controllers are able to conceal close calls that record may not remain exemplary for long.

With thousands of airplanes in the air at any given time, air traffic management can be a difficult business. In March 1999, John O'Brien, director of the engineering and air safety department of the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA), testified before Congress regarding the need to modernize our Air Traffic Control (ATC) system. After outlining all that needs to be done, he stated, "ALPA believes that ATC modernizations will flounder unless



Charles W. Jones
International President

How much should we spend to find out whether Mars has water?

Congress provides a reliable funding stream that allows development of hardware, software, procedures, and training programs."

How has Congress responded? The total budget for the FAA is about half of NASA's budget, and most of those funds go to maintain current operations. Apparently, Congress believes that modernizing ATC equipment is not as important as studying the surface of Mars.

As a nation, I think we'd be better off if those rocket scientists at NASA were put to work modernizing our air traffic control system.

Air travel is not the only area of transportation being shortchanged by Congress. Our railroads have been neglected for decades. It is ironic that

the U.S., which pioneered the development of rail travel, should now have a passenger rail service inferior to the systems found in countries as poor as Portugal.

I doubt I have to tell anyone how badly our roads need work. Traffic on the interstate highway system has reached dangerous levels. Nearly one-third of our bridges are so badly in need of repair they are considered unsafe by most engineers. Four-lane and two-lane feeder highways are clogged and in poor condition.

In order to balance the budget, Congress keeps cutting spending. As dollars get tighter, we need to ask which is more important – looking for water on Mars or keeping our economy strong.

If we find water on Mars, only a handful of Americans will ever even know about it. But if we allow our transportation infrastructure to fall apart, our economy will crumble right behind it.

When it comes to budget priorities, let's keep our goals down to earth. □

Commentary wins award

AT THEIR BIENNIAL convention in October 1999, the International Labor Communications Association (ILCA) awarded International President Charles W. Jones a third-place prize in the opinion category for his commentary, "Is all this political activity worthwhile?," published in the Mar-Apr 1998 issue of *the Boilermaker Reporter*.

The creators of Blue's Bunch also won a third-place award in the cartoon category for their cartoon that appeared in the same issue. □

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

L-154's Michel: Help the retirees

REGARDING RETIREES going back to work up to 1,000 hours a year: If you want to help retirees, why not find a way to help them pay for their health insurance. This surely would help them more than having them go back on the job site, where they could jeopardize their health even more. I do understand that some may elect to go back to work, but they must be in good health. What about those in poor health? What can be done for them?

RONALD F. MICHEL, L-154 retiree
Library, Pa.

L-647's Larson on drug policy

THE MOST BOARD of Trustees have put in place a National Random Drug Testing Program. In our Local 647 jurisdiction, a Boilermaker may have to drive several hours to find someone collecting urine. The contractors will give us two hours pay if we test off the clock. That does not add up.

ROBERT M. LARSON, Local 647
Minneapolis, Minn.

L-154's Baldwin on benefits, mechanics

ALL BOILERMAKERS SHOULD have full pension, including all benefits paid by the fund. The fund has grown enormously by our hard work, and we should benefit more from it.

Also in the Nov-Dec paper, Martin Holland of L-454 wrote about a push for apprentices to become certified

welders – that there is very little training for mechanics. A lot of the blame must fall on the contractors who call for certified welders. Most of the time they end up using the welders as mechanics. All Boilermakers do not weld. Where does this leave our mechanics? Being a Boilermaker means being mechanics as well as welders. We need both to work our trade.

ROBERT BALDWIN SR., L-154
New Florence, Pa.

L-146's Gott on union pride

I HAVE BEEN a boilermaker welder in Canada for 18 years, and a member of Local 146. Is the International aware of the choke-hold on us as union members?

We've been faced with rollbacks due to cuts in travel time, overtime hours, travel allowances, and so on.

There's a section in our contracts that states a no-strike, no-wobble, and no-lockout rule. I was under the impression that our duty according to the COMET and salting courses I took was to constantly strive for better. The no-strike, no-wobble, no-lockout rule alienates our credence to do so.

I propose that we make one agreement. Double-time for any overtime. Obliterate the no-strike, no-wobble policy, and do away with free-zones. There is an urgent need for change in this union where Canada is concerned, or we will be falling deeper into regression and fear for our jobs.

ROBB GOTT, Local 146
Edmonton, Alberta

Grisco: NAFTA kills U.S. jobs

LAST YEAR OUR trade deficit with Mexico was \$21.8 billion! The NAFTA Trade Assistance Agency in the Department of Commerce estimated a job loss of 640,000 workers due to a shift in products to Mexico. [H]eadlines should read: "NAFTA eliminates 640,000 U.S. jobs."

The big auto companies promised that NAFTA would open up the Mexican market to buy American cars. Here are the latest numbers. Last year, Mexico exported 990,000 cars and trucks into the U.S. [but] imported only 41,000 vehicles from the U.S. Since the passage of NAFTA, we import more cars and trucks from Mexico than from Germany, South Korea, Sweden, and the United Kingdom combined.

Think about that the next time you are asked to contribute your hard-earned money to a NAFTA supporter.

GERALD GRISCO, L-1 retiree
Chicago, Ill.

Got something to say?

SEND A LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

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CALL 32nd Annual LEAP Conference March 20-24 Washington, D.C.

ALL LODGES ARE reminded to prepare for the 32nd annual LEAP Conference, scheduled for March 20-24, 2000, at the Holiday Inn on the Hill in Washington, D.C.

Each year local lodge LEAP delegates meet in Washington, D.C., discuss political issues facing our members and our union, hear from legislators, and – most important of all – go to Capitol Hill to carry the Boilermaker message directly to our elected senators and representatives.

This year the conference is especially important because of the presidential elections. All lodges are encouraged to participate.

Hotel reservations must be made no later than February 20th in order to receive the special Boilermaker room rate. All delegates should make appointments to see their elected representatives prior to coming to Washington.

For more information, contact Legislative Director Ande Abbott at 703-560-1493.