L-169 members tear down, rebuild blast furnace in under 100 days

Crews work 1.4 million man-hours with no serious injuries

ABOUT 250 BOILERMAKERS — members of Local 169 (Detroit) and travelers from other Boilermaker lodges — set a new standard for steelmakers worldwide when they removed and replaced a “C” blast furnace in record-setting time.

According to Marty Mulcahy of the Building Tradesman, “steelmakers from around the world were watching this project, wondering if an entire 59-year-old blast furnace could be dismantled and then replaced during the ambitious time-frame. The answer was ‘yes.’ Fire was put in the belly of the replacement furnace on Oct. 17, three days ahead of schedule.”

Working with other union building trades members, Boilermakers did a complete tear-down and re-build of the blast furnace, which included building the stove and dust collector.

“Boilermakers rose to the occasion and brought the job in three days early,” said L-169 BM-ST Anthony Jacobs. “I was extremely happy with our apprentices’ performance on the job. They worked 97 12-hour days straight and were a major factor in the success of this job.”

Working around the clock, the “C” blast furnace at SeverStal North America’s Ford Rouge site in Dearborn, Mich., was completed on budget, and ahead of the 100-day schedule. Over 1.4 million man-hours were worked with no serious injuries.

Ohio locals rally for Obama

CANDIDATE VISITS NATIONAL GYPSUM PLANT

IN THE RUN-UP to the Ohio Democratic primary March 4, Boilermaker locals launched a coordinated effort to support Sen. Barack Obama in his hotly-contested race for the presidency.

Local 85 (Toledo), Local 105 (Chillicothe), and Local 744 (Cleveland) held union hall rallies, inviting members to learn more about the candidate. Boilermakers also attended a rally at the Cleveland Convention Center, and they advertised their support at various sites with helium blimps, Obama signs, and bright yellow T-shirts. Local D416 (Lorain) members saw Obama up close when they visited the National Gypsum Co. plant where they work.

The intense activity of these locals followed on the heels of the International Executive Council’s Feb. 20 announcement that it is endorsing Obama for president. (See related story on page 2.)

Local 85 BM-ST Fred Keith Jr., accompanied by retiree Glen Gruetter, volunteered to drive the Boilermaker bus, emblazoned with pro-Obama signage, from city to city to support Boilermaker activities, “We got to shake hands with Senator Obama and ask him questions,” Keith said. “After talking with him, I think his heart is with working-class people. Never in my 30 years as a Boilermaker have I seen anybody put on a primary like this. People just gravitate to this guy.”

Local 105 Pres. Wyndham Sparling said representatives of Obama’s campaign traveled to his lodge, where about 45 members assembled to hear the formal endorsement message and ask questions about Obama’s positions. “It went really well,” he said, “despite the bad weather.”
End tax incentives that reward companies for moving jobs overseas.

Commit to clean coal-fired power generation.

Invest $210 billion to rebuild infrastructure.

Expand unemployment benefits.

Provide tax cut for working families.

Make affordable health care coverage available to all Americans.

ICB backs Barack Obama.

Endorsement is unanimous

THE INTERNATIONAL Brotherhood of Boilermakers threw its weight behind Barack Obama’s presidential bid Feb. 20, announcing its official endorsement of the Illinois senator as he campaigned in Ohio two weeks before the primary there.

IP Newton B. Jones said the International Executive Council unanimously endorsed Obama because “this exceptionally strong stance for working people…Jones acknowledged other candidates—especially Sens. John Edwards, Joseph Biden, Christopher Dodd, and Hillary Clinton, and Gov. Bill Richardson—who whose campaigns also appealed to the middle class. “Clearly, we have been offered the finest field of superbly qualified candidates. But one stands out now: Barack Obama.”

“Barack Obama has shown the energy and vision to unite Americans, jumpstart our economy, and put working people first again.” — IP Newton B. Jones

Barack Obama’s plan to create jobs and grow our economy

Ontario unions ratchet up political involvement

Local 128, other trades help elect working-family candidates

STEPPED-UP POLITICAL involvement by the Ontario Construction Trades Council in recent years has made a big difference in provincial government, says Jim Tinney, Local 128 (Ontario) BM-ST. That difference can be seen in the last two elections in which pro-labor candidates from the Ontario Liberal Party have won and sustained clear majorities.

The Liberal Party went into control of the government in 2003 and maintained their majority in the October 2007 elections, thanks in part to the Working Families campaign, acclamation of construction trade unions and other organizations. Patrick Dillon, business manager of the Ontario Construction Trades Council and a spokesman for Working Families, calls the coalition “an independent non-partisan organization raising awareness about issues that are important to families.”

In the last provincial election, Working Families launched a vigorous and successful advertising program and website that reminded voters of the harm done to working families when Ontario Progressive Conservatives (PCs) with a right-wing agenda held the majority. Although political analysts predicted the PCs might take back the majority from the Liberal Party, the Working Families campaign helped make sure that didn’t happen.

Using targeted advertising in key ridings (legislative districts), Working Families convinced non-voters to reject PC leader John Tory’s bid to become Ontario’s premier and head of a Conservative majority.

“Local 128, as part of the construction trades council and the Working Families campaign, has helped educate our members and other voters about what’s at stake in provincial elections,” says Tinney. The campaign has a great Web site — www.working-families.ca — and the ads run by the group have been compelling, he notes.

Tinney says Local 128 members contribute up to two cents an hour for political education. “It works even better like LEAP (Legislative Education Action Program) does in the United States. We hire professionals to do polling and handle the communications. That was the big difference. And those members were certainly a good part of that effort. We’re pretty proud of what we’ve done.”

The truth about Sen. John McCain

JOHN MCCAIN is a war hero with a reputation as a man of integrity. Some say he is a straight-shooter who will be a welcome change from Pres. Bush. Don’t be fooled.

In his positions, McCain is almost indistinguishable from George W. Bush. Since Bush took office, McCain has voted with the president 89 percent of the time. After voters made it clear in 2006 that they were fed up with Bush’s direction for the nation, his support rose to 95 percent.

On healthcare, taxes, care, free-trade, and the economy, he is virtually identical to President Bush. And recently he damaged his claims of leadership by trying to make an end run around his own campaign finance laws. Visit www.McCainrevealed.com to learn the truth about the candidate who deems he doesn’t understand economics but assures us the economy is not in a recession.
LEAP names 2008 legislative issues

Delegates to lobby

Congress on matters vital to Boilermaker families

BOILERMAKER DELEGATES will make their voices heard on Capitol Hill during the 40th annual LEAP conference April 20-24, as they press legislators on issues vital to the future of their jobs and their families.

Meeting with congressmen and aides in their House and Senate offices, delegates will focus on climate change, trade, immigration, and shipbuilding. These are issues the Boilermakers’ Government Affairs Department determined to be the most urgent at this time.

Suggested handouts to the delegates before they begin their lobbying efforts:

The 2008 legislative issues are summarized below.

Climate change

MOUNTING SCIENTIFIC evidence makes it clear that the United States must act soon to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with global climate change. The threat of global warming affects our livelihoods and our future—right here in North America but in societies around the world.

Congress should respond by enacting a comprehensive, economy-wide, cap-and-trade program. Such a program has been used in the United States to control sulfur dioxide emissions (a primary cause of acid rain), and it has been largely successful, achieving a 41 percent reduction since the mid-1990s.

Under cap-and-trade, our government would set a limit or “cap” on how much carbon dioxide emissions may release. Companies within these industries would be allotted so many emission credits. Those that perform under the cap could “bank” their credits or sell them to firms exceeding the cap. This approach limits the total amount of emissions, rewards companies who stay under the cap, and provides an incentive to develop new technology rather than requiring an abrupt change that could put them out of business, resulting in job loss and economic disruption. The cap could be adjusted periodically to encourage additional reductions.

Legislation to create a cap-and-trade program must provide for energy incentives—wind, solar, nuclear, fossil fuel, and other power sources. It must also ensure investment in low-carbon technology and accelerated deployment of advanced coal technologies using carbon capture and sequestration (separating carbon dioxide from coal and storing it either below ground or in the atmosphere). Additionally, we must pursue international action and cooperation to reduce emissions. It is a global phenomenon, and every country must participate in the solution.

Finally, we must ensure that any efforts to reduce carbon emissions do not result in unreasonable increases in energy costs.

China policy, Colombia FTA, enhanced TAA

FOR TOO LONG, the administration has failed to act on China’s unfair trade practices. China manipulates its currency against the dollar to gain an unfair competitive advantage, pushing the U.S. trade deficit ever higher. We support the remedies contained in the Aphan-Hunter Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act (HR 2942). We also support additional solutions to the difficulties faced by U.S. workers and manufacturers.

Congress must act to level the playing field against China’s artifically cheap exports to the United States. Also, Congress must make clear to the administration that it will not approve the recently negotiated trade agreement with Colombia. Colombia is the most dangerous country in the world for trade unionists, according to the International Labor Organization. Last year, nearly 200 Colombians were killed because of trade union activities. The United States must ensure that our trading partners are committed to respecting worker rights, and reject any new job-killing trade agreements.

In addition, Congress must improve the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act (TAA), a law that helps workers who have lost their jobs due to trade agreements. The House of Representatives took a strong step by passing the Trade and Globalization Assistance Act (TGA). This act expands TAA by providing training and other resources to those impacted by “globalization.” TAA currently limits assistance to a narrow group of workers—those directly affected by free-trade pacts. TGA recognizes that many workers are impacted by the global economy, even if not as a direct result of a trade agreement.

TGA also extends assistance to service workers, where TAA is restricted to workers who produce a physical product. Unfortunately, some senators and the administration have stood in the way of the 60 votes necessary to move forward on this important issue.

Immigration

THE H-2B VISA system enables U.S. employers to fill their temporary needs for seasonal, peak load, or intermittently labor shortages, but this system also needs to accommodate short-term labor needs in the building and construction industry. It should authorize joint labor-manage- ment organizations and building trades unions to sponsor temporary admission of skilled workers from abroad using an accelerated process.

Changes to the U.S.-H-2B visa program would help ensure that the admission of foreign workers does not undermine the U.S. labor standards. It would ensure the availability of skilled, well-trained Boilermakers to meet domestic needs. And it would also delay allowed times in skilled power plant maintenance that would deny work opportuni ties to U.S. Boilermakers.

Shipbuilding

THE JONES ACT has encouraged a strong U.S. commercial shipbuilding industry since its passage in 1920. It requires that vessels carrying cargo between U.S. ports be built and maintained in the United States. This requirement supports good shipbuilding jobs. It also ensures that our industrial base maintains the skilled workers necessary to build vessels to defend our nation.

However, some U.S. commercial shipbuilders—with approval from the U.S. Coast Guard—have undermined the Jones Act by pre-fabricating and assembling major components offshore, with just final assembly performed in U.S. shipyards.

Congress must call on the administration to preserve the integrity of the Jones Act and protect this vital industry.

In addition, the administration continues the misguided practice of entering into long-term leases of foreign-built ships. These activities deny employment opportunities to U.S. shipbuilders and undermine our shipbuilding industrial base. The Congressional Appropriations Committee should restrict federal funding for any leases of foreign-built ships to no longer than two years. And it should provide authorities to procure American ships to replace those currently under lease agreements.

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Dying pines signal global warming has arrived

THE SIZE OF A GRAIN of rice, the female mountain pine beetle is able to slip through the crevices in the bark of lodgepole, ponderosa, scots, and limber pine trees and lay her eggs. In about two weeks, the eggs hatch, releasing white larvae that tunnel into the phloem of the tree, the part that transports nutrients from the roots to the limbs. They feed on the phloem through the winter, pupate in late spring, and then the mature beetles attack another tree.

Within weeks after a heavy beetle attack begins, the phloem is damaged enough to cut off the flow of nutrients and water, starving the tree. Once a tree is infested with beetles, nothing practical can be done to save it.

During the early stages of an outbreak, attacks are limited to trees already stressed by injury, fire damage, overcrowding, root disease, or old age. But as beetles become more established and numerous, they begin attacking all large trees in the area. Their natural enemies—mostly woodpeckers and clerid beetles—are able to slow their advance, but cold weather has been the biggest factor in limiting their damage. A severe freeze in late fall will kill the larvae when they are most vulnerable; one in late spring can kill them in the pupal stage. During the middle of winter, temperatures must be at least 30 degrees below zero (Fahrenheit) for five days to kill the larva burrowed deep under the bark.

Forestry officials estimate pine beetles have killed half the mature lodgepole pines in British Columbia. [Photo courtesy B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range]

Global warming is not some remote threat decades in the future. It is here now, and the consequences are already outstanding. Forestry experts project the mountain pine beetle will have killed 80 percent of mature pines in B.C. by the year 2013. It takes 70 years for pine trees to mature in these forests, which may never return to their past glory.

In the 1990s, following a series of mild winters, pine beetle infestations in the British Columbia interior began expanding dramatically. By 2006, the Washington Post was reporting that they had infested 21 million acres in British Columbia (B.C.), killing 411 million cubic feet of trees — double the annual take by all loggers in Canada.

When climatologists talk about expected devastation from global warming, they like to show maps that depict the coastline after melting ice caps have raised the sea level 3, 10, 20, or even 50 feet. But aerial and satellite photographs of western Canadian forests already depict the grim reality of climate change — mile after mile of dead and dying pine forests.

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Boilermakers attend UN climate change conference

Boilermakers engage in international climate change debate

Boilermakers, along with other participants at the Bali conference, called for efforts to increase carbon emissions and to increase the number of renewable energy technologies. The United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution recognizing the need to reduce carbon emissions and to increase the number of renewable energy technologies. The assembly also called for efforts to increase the funding for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is a framework that aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to combat climate change. The convention was adopted in 1992 and entered into force in 1994. It is a legally binding agreement that commits nations to limit their greenhouse gas emissions and to take action to mitigate the effects of climate change.

The convention aims to keep the increase in global average temperature below 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels. The convention also states that nations should contribute to the goal of limiting the increase in global average temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels.

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Health kit helps Canadian members inform doctors

Boilermaker Local 128 (Toronto, Ontario), Boilermaker employers in Ontario, and other groups assisted with the booklet, which was prepared by the Ontario construction industry’s Occupational Disease and Research Labour-Management Health and Safety Committee. Jason McInnis, the Canadian National Director of Health and Safety for the Boilermakers, encourages members to take a copy of the booklet with them when seeing a doctor. To view or print the booklet, visit www.boilermaker.ca/safety.htm and select the appropriate PDF file.

IN THE NEWS

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America’s health care system is killing us

by Mike Hall

Reprinted from the AFL-CIO Blog of January 28, 2008

MORE THAN 13,000 people around the country have participated in the AFL-CIO Working America 2008 Health Care for America Survey, and more than 3,900 have submitted their own personal stories since the survey was launched.

The survey offers a unique opportunity for working families to make their voices heard on the cost of health insurance, quality of health care, access to prescription drugs, and the gamut of health care problems we all face—and impress upon candidates for the White House, Congress, and all public offices just how important health care is as a voting issue in 2008.

The survey results will be given to presidential, congressional, state, and local candidates to ensure candidates at every level understand what working families are experiencing. Along with specific questions on affordability and quality of care experiences with insurance companies, hospitals and doctors, and suggested remedies, the survey gives you the chance to tell your own story.

Here are some samples:

In Jacksonville, Fla., Pam, a former flight attendant (AFA-CWA member), was the victim of two traffic accidents that have left her disabled and in need of spinal surgery. She says her experience has shown her today’s insurers are there to make a profit off your illness. They make promises and don’t deliver on them. “Poverty is my friend now. I have no money for the medical costs because of two horrible accidents that were no fault of my own. The insurance companies basically leave you on your own. All they care about is the money.”

In Wisconsin, electrical worker (IBEW) Charles echoes that sentiment: “I now find myself at age 58 without health insurance. Any plan that I might choose to purchase outright carries an impossible deductible and a premium that is 70-80 percent of my mortgage payment. So now I avoid preventative treatment and pray that I never get seriously ill. My only hope is the incoming Democratic presidency and congressional enactment of a universal health care bill, or hold on for eight years until I’m Medicare eligible. Or take my college degrees, certifications, and 25 years of professional experience to another country.”

Many union members have submitted comments similar to those of Andrew, a plumber and pipe fitter (UA) in Minnesota: “I’m one of the fortunate ones who has good insurance through my union affiliation.”

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“I am currently going through cancer and have one more chemo to go. Thank God I joined a union some years back to be able to cover most of the costs associated with the illness. If I hadn’t, I’m sure it would be a matter of bankruptcy. While working nonunion, I had a broken heel, and the medical costs almost sent me there.”

Facts about Global Warming

The Bad News

1. Atmospheric carbon dioxide levels have risen 30% since the start of the Industrial Revolution.
2. Temperatures have risen 1.2 degrees Fahrenheit since the Industrial Revolution.
3. There is abundant evidence that the two are intimately connected.

The Good News

1. It takes a long time for an ice sheet a mile deep to melt.
2. We already have technology that can reduce emissions.
3. We are fully capable of developing new technology that does an even better job.
Recruiting program adds 500 workers in first year

MOST initiative helps contractors meet manpower challenge

“THERE ARE LOTS of people out there who would like to work for our signatory contractors. They just have to be asked.” That assessment by Gary Evenson, AIP-Director-Construction Recruitment Services, sums up the purpose of MOST, which stands for Mobilization, Optimization, Stabilization, and Training. Created as a Taft-Hartley trust, the organization serves the interest of both the contractors and the Boilermakers union.

With a construction boom underway in heavy industry, nearly two million new craft workers will be needed in the United States in the next 10 years — yet the pool of skilled workers continues to shrink as baby boomers retire. MOST hopes to attract qualified nonunion workers to fill gaps where needed. Succeeding in this mission will help signatory contractors keep, and perhaps expand, their market share. It will also give locals an opportunity to evaluate potential new members — and grow their lodges.

Evenson, who spent more than a dozen years as a Boilermaker Fight back organizer and led the formation of Local 4 in Page, Ariz., began directing the recruitment effort August 1. He oversees five recruiters, one in each of the five U.S. geographical jurisdictions of the International Vice Presidents. Evenson compiled figures through Nov. 20, 2007, showing that recruiters brought in about 500 nonunion craftsmen who went to work for signatory contractors. More than 2,000 workers attended MOST seminars last fall. The numbers we’re talking about is a good-size manpower challenge, says Evenson. “There are some contractors who actually pay a higher daily rate and per diem than nonunion contractors who actually pay their pension and health care taken care of, or a bumpy ride, without benefits.”

“I tell these young guys, ‘What you’re doing now is creating a road for life. You can make it a smooth ride, with your pension and health care taken care of, or a bumpy ride, without benefits.’”

— Gary Evenson, AIP-Director-Construction Recruitment Services

Students join L-11 members at job site

Demand for skilled workers allows for interesting classroom project

NINE MEMBERS OF a welding class left the UM-Helena College of Technology last year to get some hands-on experience by working side-by-side with members of Local 11 (Helena, Mont.) at the Colstrip 3 Power Plant.

The students worked eight weeks, helping the Boilermakers complete repair work on a boiler and perform routine maintenance work during a scheduled shutdown at the facility. Usually one or two students have participated in past years during the shutdown, but never as many as nine, said UM welding instructor Tim Harris, who works in an interior of a steel furnace. “It’s a wonderful time for a person to make an excellent living in the trades now.”

And Harris’ students are well prepared. He has nearly 20 students who took part in a standard test administered by Tetra Tech and the American Welding Society, and the entire class earned a perfect score.

According to Local 11 BM-ST John Roeber, three of these students have joined the Boilermakers’ apprenticeship program and two of these students earned certification in tube welding on their very first job.

Roeber estimates that about 12 Local 11 members have attended UM-Helena College of Technology, including graduate apprentice Leon Seitz, who represented Local 11 in the Boilermakers’ national apprenticeship competition in Kansas City last fall.

“The members of Local 11 know where the future for the organization is,” Roeber said.
L-146 creates WorkSmart program

Training exposes students to Boilermaker and welding trades

HOW DO YOU know if you’re cut out to be a Local 146 (Edmonton, Alberta) Boilermaker? Answering that question became a lot easier for prospective members last year when the lodge launched a new program called WorkSmart.

The two-week pre-apprentice/pre-employment program exposes students to industry environments, safety issues, and workplace culture in the Boilermaker trade. WorkSmart combines theory and hands-on skills that will prepare students for gainful employment in the Boilermaker trade.

People not currently indentured in the apprenticeship program who think they may want to become a Boilermaker can enroll for the class after completing the local’s Apprentice Recruitment Information Seminar. The three-hour seminar describes the Boilermaker trade, job expectations, union philosophy, and the dispatch system. At the end of the seminar, the lodge invites attendees to complete an apprenticeship program application, a questionnaire, and an aptitude exam. The local’s apprenticeship selection committee then reviews all applications, and successful applicants can attend the WorkSmart Program.

Local 146 offered its first two-week WorkSmart course in October 2007. The lodge conducts the classes once a month and limits registrants to 12 per class.

“We like to keep the classes small so we can have the maximum amount of instructor/student interaction,” explained L-146 Apprentice Administrator J’Amey Holroyd. “We want to facilitate the learning as effectively as possible while maintaining beginner safety and confidence.”

The local conducts the classes at its training center, located on the same property as the L-146 administration and dispatch building in Edmonton. John Fletcher, pre-apprenticeship coordinator and instructor, and Ron Jacobs, instructor, teach the program.

Jason Carroll serves as an alternate/back-up instructor.

Classroom lecture makes up 50 percent of the course outline and allows for multiple guest speakers (apprenticeship coordinators, dispatcher, business manager, and trades people). The curriculum includes such topics as rigging concepts, measuring, materials, trade-related components, workplace culture, substance abuse prevention, financial planning, and identifying job site hazards.

The other half of the program provides practical, hands-on experience in the areas of flame cutting, electric arc welding, common industry tools, rigging and hoisting, outdoor work, and members.

“...with a crane.

L-146 advertises the WorkSmart program at trade shows, through flyers and posters, in their newsletter the Expander, and through word of mouth by their members.

“Currently we have a 97 percent success rate in course completion,” Holroyd reports. “We have set high standards for attitude, skill, and attendance during the two-week WorkSmart training. All individuals who have successfully completed the program are now in the process of becoming Local 146 apprentices and members.”

For more information about the WorkSmart program, please contact the Local 146 Learning Center at 780-451-9999.

L-193 forms recruiting committee

Group focuses on high schools, welding programs

LOCAL 193 (BALTIMORE) aims to put a spark in its recruiting efforts by going after those who already have an interest in welding — high school students in technical programs and those attending welding schools. The lodge formed a committee for that purpose last August.

L-193 BM-ST Ernie Dorsey said the lodge has recruited in those areas before but decided to raise its level of involvement to bolster its membership. “We’re looking for people who are not only interested in becoming Boilermaker apprentices but who already have some background in the type of skills they will need,” he said. “We are going out and meeting with instructors at Maryland schools — especially in the Baltimore area — and so far we’ve been very well received.”

L-193 officers and volunteers have created a committee to seek new members who already have basic skills.
HAZMAT/radiological training available to railroad members

National Labor College hosts expenses-paid instruction

RAILROAD LODGES that wish to send a representative to the National Labor College’s Rail Workers Hazardous Materials Training Program or the Radiological Transportation Train-the-Trainer Course should advise interested members to apply immediately (applicants may apply online at www.hazmatnc.org). The NLC has posted its 2008-09 schedule for these courses, and space is limited.

All courses will be taught at the George Meany Campus in Silver Spring, Md. Travel, lodging, and meals are provided by a federal grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and support from the North American Railway Foundation. In addition, those attending the HAZMAT classes are eligible for a $350 incentive if they are unable to secure regular pay from their railroad employer during class attendance.

The 2008-09 course schedules are as follows:

RailWorkers Hazardous Materials Training Program

- Sept. 21-26, 2008
- March 29-24, 2009
- May 3-8, 2009

Radiological Transportation Train-the-Trainer Course

- Apr. 14-18, 2008
- May 12-16, 2008

The hazardous materials training qualifies for three academic credits from the NLC. It addresses OSHA and DOT required procedures and different levels of response and worker protection in various hazardous materials emergency or release, weapons of mass destruction awareness, and the incident command system. It also includes compositional analysis and complete OSHA 10-hour outreach training. Training includes advanced classroom instruction, small group activities, intensive hands-on drills, and a simulated HAZMAT response in full safety gear.

The radiological class is the OSHA-sponsored, 60-Hour Emergency Radiological Transportation (MERRT) train-the-trainer course, which includes 16 hours of instruction. Interested rail workers may apply online at www.hazmatnc.org or may register by phone (301-439-2440) or fax (301-628-0165).

Printed applications may be mailed to: Hazmat Training Program National Labor College 10000 New Hampshire Avenue Silver Spring, Md. 20903

For more information, contact Carol Rodgers at crosgers@nlc.edu.

Years ago, asbestos workers were often exposed to high concentrations of asbestos fibers with little or no protection. Today, asbestos workers follow specific work practices and wear protection to minimize the risk of exposure. Nonetheless, the following diseases may result, suggesting that many workers are still not getting the proper protection for asbestos exposure.

ASBESTOSIS. Asbestos primarily damages the lungs. Once inhaled, asbestos-containing dust particles may reach tiny air sacs, where large cells called macrophages attempt to engulf the particles and digest them. When that is not successful, these cells deposit a coating on the fibers and begin forming scar tissue around them. When enough scar tissue is formed, asbestos results.

Asbestos reduces lung capacity so the first symptom is usually shortness of breath. The greater the exposure, the more likely the disease is to develop. Asbestos disease is the most common among workers who have been exposed to high concentrations over a long period of time. All forms of asbestos can cause asbestosis, and the disease typically is not diagnosed until 15-30 years after exposure.

LUNG CANCER. Asbestos is one of many causes of lung cancer. Workers exposed to asbestos are five times as likely to develop lung cancer as workers never exposed. Cigarette smoke increases the risk of developing asbestosis by 50 times as likely to develop asbestosis as non-smokers who are not exposed. The risk is further increased because cigarette smoke paralyzes the cilia—a hair-like lining of the airways. Cilia capture dust and debris before they can enter the lungs, protecting the lungs from toxic substances. Paralyzed cilia cannot move, so dust or debris can enter the lungs, causing irritation, coughing, and irritation to the lungs.

Mesorhildioma is the most serious asbestos-associated disease. Fortunately, it is also the rarest. Mesothelioma is a cancer that can form in the cells of the body lining certain areas of the body. It spreads rapidly and is almost always fatal. The exact mechanism of this disease remains unknown, and some mesothelioma victims have had only limited exposure to asbestos.

Mesorhildioma may not develop for 30-40 years after initial exposure.

Where asbestos may be found

Because ACM may be found in a variety of building materials to enhance strength. It is found in concrete and concrete-like products, siding and roofing shingles, wallboard, roofing, cladding, partitions, interior floor tile, tile grout, exterior cementitious materials, asbestos cement pipes, and furnaces.

Asbestos may be found in a variety of building materials to enhance strength. It is found in concrete and concrete-like products, siding and roofing shingles, wallboard, roofing, cladding, partitions, interior floor tile, tile grout, exterior cementitious materials, asbestos cement pipes, and furnaces.

Asbestos is usually sprayed, applied, trowel-applied, or factory installed on or within equipment, vessels, pipes, boilers, and furnaces.

Health hazards

HUNDREDS OF MEDICAL studies have shown that inhaling asbestos fibers may increase the risk of developing lung diseases.

Employers must pay for safety gear

The OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY and Health Administration published a final rule Nov. 14 clarifying how much of an employee’s personal protective equipment (PPE) must be paid for by the employer. With few exceptions, the rule requires employers to pay for nearly all personal protective gear. Exceptions include ordinary safety-toed footwear, prescription safety eyewear, and clothing and weather-related gear.

The rule takes effect in May 2008. Nearly a decade after it was first proposed. “OSHA had to be sure with the AFL-CIO and the UFCW [United Food and Commercial Workers] to force them to adopt these rules,” said Dan Racic, Boilermakers’ safety and health specialist.

The delay has been blamed for unnecessary injuries and deaths. OSHA stated that the rule will prevent 21,000 occupational injuries each year. Edwin Foulke Jr., OSHA administrator, said the rule will cost employers an additional $85 million per year, but will save them more than $320 million in medical and insurance costs.

District D11 forms safety committee

Group will serve cement locals in Western Canada

SAFETY ISSUES FOR Western Canadian members working in the cement, wallboard, and quarrying industries will be the focus of a new committee created by Cement District Lodge D11. The committee held its first meeting Dec. 7 in Calgary.

District Lodge D11 includes locals in Alberta, lodges D331 (Doxbow), D345 (Calgary), and D309 and D513 (Edmonton), in British Columbia, lodges D277 (Bamberton), D385 and D490 (Vancouver), D479 (Invermere), D486 (New Westminster), and D93 (Kamloops); in Manitoba, lodges D969, D209, D274 (Winnipeg), and D375 (Moosonee).

District Lodge D11 BM-ST Rob Lauzen then said the Western Safety Committee will allow the various member lodges to share experiences and best practices related to health and safety and to make recommendations on developing future plans and strategies.

The committee plans to meet two to three times each year.

Attending the first meeting were Lauzon, Jason McNeeis, Canadian National Director of Health and Safety; Steve Wilson and Mike Weber, Local D277; Ed Gall and Stuart Blideau, Local D359; George Lister and Rick Peterson, Local D331; and John O’Connor, David Chicoine, and Everett Jeffrey, Local D385.

Train-the-Trainer Course

Asbestos appears as a fiber. But what looks like a single fiber is actually thousands of fibers, each of which can be divided even further into microscopic fibers. When ACM is disturbed, these microscopic fibers can become airborne and enter a person’s lungs without being noticed.

In the lungs, asbestos may cause asbestosis, mesothelioma, or mesothelioma—all of which can be fatal. Because the symptoms of these diseases may not appear for 15-40 years, work in some occupations may expose people to asbestos without their realizing it. Sometimes employers may not be aware of asbestos exposure.

HAZMAT/radiological training available to railroad members

Safeguards must be in place to eliminate any asbestos exposure if proper work practices are not followed. Before disturbing any asbestos fibers with little or no protection to minimize the risk of exposure.

Nonetheless, the following diseases may result, suggesting that many workers are still not getting the proper protection for asbestos exposure.

Asbestos primarily damages the lungs. Once inhaled, asbestos-containing dust particles may reach tiny air sacs, where large cells called macrophages attempt to engulf the particles and digest them. When that is not successful, these cells deposit a coating on the fibers and begin forming scar tissue around them. When enough scar tissue is formed, asbestos results.

Asbestos reduces lung capacity so the first symptom is usually shortness of breath. The greater the exposure, the more likely the disease is to develop, so asbestos disease is the most common among workers who have been exposed to high concentrations over a long period of time. All forms of asbestos can cause asbestosis, and the disease typically is not diagnosed until 15-30 years after exposure.

LUNG CANCER. Asbestos is one of many causes of lung cancer. Workers exposed to asbestos are five times as likely to develop lung cancer as workers never exposed. Cigarette smoke increases the risk of developing asbestosis by 50 times as likely to develop asbestosis as non-smokers who are not exposed. The risk is further increased because cigarette smoke paralyzes the cilia—a hair-like lining of the airways. Cilia capture dust and debris before they can enter the lungs, protecting the lungs from toxic substances. Paralyzed cilia cannot move, so dust or debris can enter the lungs, causing irritation, coughing, and irritation to the lungs.

Mesorhildioma is the most serious asbestos-associated disease. Fortunately, it is also the rarest. Mesothelioma is a cancer that can form in the cells of the body lining certain areas of the body. It spreads rapidly and is almost always fatal. The exact mechanism of this disease remains unknown, and some mesothelioma victims have had only limited exposure to asbestos.

Mesorhildioma may not develop for 30-40 years after initial exposure.

Where asbestos may be found

Because ACM may be found in a variety of building materials to enhance strength. It is found in concrete and concrete-like products, siding and roofing shingles, wallboard, roofing, cladding, partitions, interior floor tile, tile grout, exterior cementitious materials, asbestos cement pipes, and furnaces.

Asbestos is usually sprayed, applied, trowel-applied, or factory installed on or within equipment, vessels, pipes, boilers, and furnaces.

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Canadian construction lodge leaders meet

Members discuss contracts, jurisdiction, safety, and training

CONSTRUCTION LODGE LEADERS from across Canada gathered for a two-day conference in Quebec City, Quebec, Sept. 11-12. Conducted by International Vice Presidents Joe Maloney and Ed Power, the meeting drew representatives of the following local lodges: Local 73 (Halifax, Nova Scotia); Local 128 (Toronto, Ontario); Local 271 (Montreal, Quebec); Local 359 (Vancouver, British Columbia); and Local 355 (Winnipeg, Manitoba).

Featured guest speaker was David Galvin, the new president of the Boilermaker Contractors’ Association (BCA). The BCA, representing about 320 Boilermaker contractors, is the number one employer group for the Boilermakers union in Canada. Galvin has 25 years experience in labour relations and human resources, including training, negotiating, and servicing industrial and construction agreements. He spoke about the importance of building a good reputation.

“Most important thing is our reputation — how we think about ourselves, how the client thinks about us, the contractors, and the union,” Galvin said. “Status quo is not acceptable. There are others who want to do our work.”

IVP Power discussed the success the Eastern Canada Tripartite has had in getting the union, contractors, and owners/clients working on solutions together.

IWP Maloney reviewed the Boilermakers’ Web site (www.boilermaker.org). He reported on the number of visits to the site and the travel card pool. Created to fulfill manpower requirements of contractors and clients across Canada, the travel card pool also lets members apply for jobs online. Instead of driving to a local lodge dispatch office and waiting there for a job assignment, a member can access the Web site and wait for the call from wherever they are presently located.

Other speakers included National Apprentice Coordinator Grant Jacobs and National Safety Director Jassen McInnis. Jacobs presented a national training report and discussed training programs for supervisors, master riggers, and disaster response. McInnis reported on the national health and safety committee.

Attendees at the annual meeting also reviewed outlines for a new basic and level-two steward training program (presented by IVPs Richard MacPhail, updates to the General President and National Maintenance Agreements, and jurisdictional matters.

“The most important thing is our reputation — how we think about ourselves, how the client thinks about us, the contractors, and the union.”

— David Galvin, president, Boilermaker Contractors Association

STEWARDS SOURCEBOOK

COMPANY RULES

9 THINGS TO CONSIDER

OFTEN MEMBERS RUN into problems when they are accused of violating a company rule. Companies have broad powers to establish rules, as long as they don’t conflict with the law or with the collective bargaining agreement. But nothing is automatic, and often the union can challenge a discipline stemming from a rule violation — or even the rule itself.

When a member comes to you with a rule-violation problem, here are some things to consider:

1. Is the rule applied evenly? If the no-smoking ban is enforced on day shift, but not on night shift, the company has a problem. If Sam gets a three-day suspension for playing tag with a forklift, while Joe is fired for the same incident, you might be able to get Joe his job back if his work record is virtually identical to Sam’s.

2. Are there extenuating circumstances? Sometimes the age, past record, or family problems, or other circumstances make a good argument to reduce the punishment for a person who, admittedly, did break the rule.

3. Were workers notified when the rule was established or changed? Arbitrators generally agree that it is unreasonable to expect workers to adhere to a rule they don’t know about. Did the company make an effort to let workers know of it? Did they notify workers of the penalties for violating it? Can the company produce a document showing that workers were notified?

4. Is the rule understandable? The rule should be clear and specific, not vaguely worded or vague. “Excessive absenteeism” means different things to different people. “Three days of absence within any continuous 12-month period without prior approval of the human resources office” is pretty clear.

5. Does the rule cause undue hardship for some workers? Allowing only a 20-minute lunch break could penalize workers who are a long walk from the lunchroom.

6. Did management consult with the union before imposing or changing the rule? Although some rules are not subject to mandatory bargaining, the union should always be notified and/or consulted before a new rule is set in place.

7. Did management follow due process? Most contracts call for some sort of process — usually verbal warnings followed by written warnings, suspension, and finally discharge. Even without that language in the contract, employers are often held responsible for counseling wayward employees or offering retraining if performance is an issue.

8. Can management prove the worker actually broke the rule? Hearings evidence (Joe says he heard ...) and circumstantial evidence are weak arguments for imposing discipline.

9. Does the rule serve a practical purpose? If a violation of the rule doesn’t harm the company or any of its employees, why have the rule?

As with all grievances, stewards will need to do plenty of investigating before tackling a grievance involving an alleged violation of a company rule. You may need to request some company documents, such as the following:

• The company’s written rules
• The company’s evidence the member was notified of the rule
• Attendance records (for violations of attendance rules)
• Records of previous disciplinary actions based on violation of this rule.

Whenever your investigation takes you, the more information you have — on the alleged action, the rule itself, and how the company has acted in the past — the more likely you are to resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of your member.

The Steward Sourcebook is back. This column will be a regular feature in future issues of the Boilermaker Reporter. If you have suggestions for topics or would like to contribute an article for this column, please contact the Reporter editorial office or e-mail Donald Caswell at dcaswell@boilermakers.org. The editors also welcome nominations for Star Steward.
Graycor was the general contractor on the project, along with Metro Industrial, Power Process Piping, and Triangle Electric. At peak employment, over 1,000 hardhats were on the job.

SeverStal project manager Keith Kahl said, “Everyone in the industry is asking ‘How did you do it?’ About 10 or 12 people told us they couldn’t believe the job done by this work force. The building trades did very well out here. They said we couldn’t get it done in 100 days, we got it done early. It was an unprecedented job.”

Andy Payne of Metro Industrial Contracting said, “This kind of schedule has never been successful before. I think we owe our success to good planning, proper scheduling and constructability, and the great efforts put forth by the building trades. If something didn’t fit, the tradesmen made it fit. It was a real team effort, and from the very beginning, the people out here took pride in their work.”

Getting the job done

UNION MEMBERS BEGAN to tear down the old blast furnace at the steel-making operation last June. It took about three weeks to dismantle the old “C” furnace, most of which dated back to the late 1940s. Only the old support columns were incorporated into the rebuilt furnace.

The new furnace is cleaner and more environmentally friendly. According to a SeverStal publication, engineering manager Dave Morris said the new furnace will “utilize state-of-the-art technologies that will make it the most efficient and productive blast furnace in the world.” It is now producing over 4,500 tons of pig iron a day, twice what was expected at start up.

Morris said the new furnace has less polluting emissions, less operating costs, and increased production over the old furnace. Energy consumption is also considerably less, he said, as the new furnace uses pulverized coal as fuel instead of costlier natural gas.

A blast furnace operates at about 2,800 degrees. It is the first step in removing impurities and producing steel from iron ore. Pig iron that is produced in a blast furnace is taken to a basic oxygen furnace, and then refined into a higher grade of steel.

Morris said dismantling the old furnace was probably the most complex aspect of the project. It was taken down in multiple components. The final phase of demolition was the removal of residual solidified iron in the furnace, called the “salamander.” It was a block of iron 29 feet in diameter and four feet thick, weighing 450 tons. Dynamite was used to fracture the mass of iron.

Most of the new furnace sections were assembled on the ground in front of the old furnace and then lifted into place. Some sections were assembled on a barge, floated to the plant’s boat slip, and transported to the furnace. The largest pre-assembled section weighed 500 tons, making it one of the heaviest lifts in North America in 2007.

The project also involved constructing a new two-million-pound cast house, which was pre-assembled nearby. It took one day to roll the structure into place next to the blast furnace.

The new furnace is part of a $750 million expenditure by SeverStal to enhance its steelmaking operations. Steelmaking operations continued during construction, as SeverStal utilized its “B” blast furnace on site — which dates to 1921.

Photos and Story Source: Marty Mulcahy, The Building Tradesman
L-40 revamps Marathon regenerator

Boilermakers work 80,000 man-hours with no recordables

WORKING FOR CONSTRUCTION Turnaround Services of Tulsa, Okla., members of Local 40 (Elizabethtown, Ky.) have completed a “head-off” plenum and cyclone rebuild at Marathon Petroleum’s Catlettsburg, Ky., oil refinery. Together with travelers from other area Boilermaker lodges, they worked 80,000 man-hours with no recordable accidents.

The job employed about 140 Boilermakers: 80 from Local 40, 40 from the National Transient Lodge, and the rest from Locals 30 (Greensboro, N.C.), 105 (Chillicothe, Ohio), 199 (Jacksonville, Fla.), 667 (Charleston, W.Va.), and 906 (Donora, Pa.). The regenerator is used to clean up spent clay catalyst. A catalyst is used during the refining process to separate out coke during a reaction that changes gas oils into more useful types of oil. The regenerator burns the coke from the catalyst so it may be reused.

The job began in April 2007 with the unloading and assembling of a Lampson 2,600-ton crane. The crane’s boom was 340-ft. long and was loaded with 5.2 million pounds of counterweight.

“The actual shutdown began on Sept. 5, 2007, and finished Oct. 31, 2007; however, we still had a small crew at the site as late as Jan. 25 dismantling and loading out the big crane,” reported L-40 ABM Michael Autry.

Some of the larger lifts at the job included removal of the regenerator head with the old plenum and cyclones that weighed 650 tons, and its replacement weighing 680 tons with rigging. “I believe this shows the skills and dedication of Local 40 and NTL members who completed this work without a recordable injury,” reported L-40 BM-ST Ray Parrott, “especially since the work involved a lot of high and heavy rigging, plus working seven days a week for an extended period.”

L-40 completes outage

BABCOCK & WILCOX CONSTRUCTION Co. Inc. (BWCC) would like to thank the management and members of Boilermakers Local 154 (Pittsburgh) for their excellent work and support in making the First-Energy Corp. Mansfield Unit 3 reheat replacement a successful outage. The outage was completed with no lost-time accidents and no recordable incidents because Local 154 and BWCC are committed to safety and incorporate safety into the daily work plans as a cooperative team effort.

Prior to the outage, FirstEnergy Corp., Local 154, and BWCC held numerous meetings to jointly review the schedule and manpower requirements. This enabled Local 154 to plan for the outage manpower needs. Mark Angle (L-154 Business Agent) and Mike Ventrone (L-154 Vice President) worked closely with BWCC and Larry Wargo (FirstEnergy Corp.) during the outage to address manpower requirements. Their communication and manpower status reports allowed BWCC to make efficient use of Boilermaker manpower on a daily basis.

The support BWCC received from Local 154 was a significant factor in the safe completion of this outage, ahead of schedule. The quality of work was outstanding, with a reject rate of only 1.5 percent out of approximately 8,900 reheat tube welds.

Local 154’s assistance and professional approach is appreciated.

JOHN SCHUMACHER, eastern operations manager Babcock & Wilcox Construction Co. Inc.
Apprentice serves with South Carolina National Guard

SPECIALIST THOMAS SIBLEY, a third-period apprentice with Local 687 (Charleston Heights, S.C.) didn’t figure on putting his welding skills to much use when his National Guard unit shipped out to Afghanistan in May 2007. A communications specialist with the 218th Brigade Combat Team, Sibley handles video teleconferencing assignments, linking his unit to others around the world.

But an engineering commander discovered that Sibley, 35, also has skills that are in high demand in Kabul, the Afghan capital. “I’m a certified tube welder,” Sibley said. “I learned to weld at a vocational school and also at the Army’s welding school. And I was an apprentice with Local 687 before my unit was called up.”

The commander asked Sibley to teach local Afghan construction workers how to do specific welds for the U.S. military. “Their welding skills weren’t up to par,” Sibley said, “so I stepped in for a couple of weeks and showed them how to do horizontal and vertical welds using 7018 rods.”

Sibley, who has served 11 years with the National Guard, said he plans to continue his apprenticeship with Local 687 when his unit returns to South Carolina, probably in May 2008.

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Local 374 members complete rigging yard

New addition reinforces lodge’s commitment to contractors, customers

MEMBERS OF LOCAL Lodge 374 have not one, but two high-tech training facilities. One is located by their lodge office in Hammond, Ind.; the other can be found about 300 miles south in Dale, Ind., where members recently completed a new rigging yard.

The rigging yard will be used to train all Local 374 apprentices in multiple rigging classes. The 60-ft. by 80-ft. structure has tuggers and a snatch-block system, but still has enough room for mobile equipment. It has three fixed tiers on the west end, and a removable structure on the east end that will be used to teach steel erection and dismantling.

Ground was broken for the Dale rigging yard last April by Sterling Boiler crews who performed the site and civil work, including the footings, piers, and flat work.

The structure was fabricated off-site and arrived in mid-July. Local 374 journeymen and apprentice volunteers then erected the structure in 14 days, working in summer temperatures of over 100 degrees.

“This new addition to our training program will reinforce Local 374’s commitment to our contractors and customers that our craft’s goal is to be the leader of the Building Trades serving heavy industry,” said Local 374 BM-ST Paul Maday.
**Boilermakers sell T-shirts to raise funds**

Money helps two car accident victims, both Local 359 members

WHEN SEPARATE CAR accidents left two Local 359 apprentices with life-changing injuries, their brother Boilermakers stepped forward to help, raising over $6,000 through T-shirt and hooded sweatshirt sales.

Colin Anderson and Dave Braithwaite, both members of Local 359 (Vancouver, British Columbia), came up with the fund-raising idea after visiting one of the accident victims (Stu Wymer) in the hospital.

“When I saw what a great attitude this guy has, I made the decision to sell the T-shirts to help Jordon (Dycke) and Stu out,” Anderson explained. He and Braithwaite started to call other members to tell them about their idea, and immediately learned that Boilermakers will support Boilermakers. The interest resulted in three separate print runs for the apparel that boasts a design Anderson and Braithwaite created: a large cross with the words “West Coast Boilermakers” and “Lodge 359” printed across the back; and “Boilermovers Lodge 359” printed in front, across the heart of the shirt.

As word got out about the fund raiser, some members began to take orders at their job sites for the shirts. Greg Piece sold shirts at the Trail smelter job, Rob Murray took orders at the Burnaby Thermal Plant, and Wayne Letcher made sales at the Chevron job. Shaun Robathan also raised funds, donating proceeds from three separate card draws. Members of Vancouver Local 359 also participated in the sales, with Gregg Dunning and Chris Edmonds selling shirts at their Richmond Lattagne plant.

At the December 2007 union meeting, Anderson presented a $3,250 check to Stu Wymer.

“I had no idea this fund raising was taking place,” Wymer said. “I am just overwhelmed. It was around the house as I was growing up about the union is there to back each other up, and this just proves it.”

The next day, Anderson traveled to Duncan, British Columbia, to present another check to Jordon and his fiancé, Shanon, who plan to use the money for their wedding this summer.

Dycke deeply appreciates the fund-raising efforts. “Over the past six years I have learned so much and have had the time of my life. I will never forget all the good times; it is something I will keep for a lifetime,” he said.

Local 359 Bus. Mgr. Carl Ellsworth said, “This administration thinks it is fantastic how the Boilermakers will rally around one of their own in a time of need.”

Intl. Vice Pres. Joe Maloney is also proud of the Local 359 members who rallied to assist these two young apprentices. “They are facing many challenges ahead,” Maloney said, “but with the support and spirit of Local 359, I am confident of their future.”

Anderson and Braithwaite are still taking orders for the T-shirts and “hoodies.” They can be contacted at westcoastboil@hotmail.com.

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**Workers at nuclear outage dig deep for troops abroad**

UNION CONSTRUCTION workers at Exelon’s Dresden Nuclear Station near Chicago have collected more than $8,000 for pre-paid phone cards and customized care packages for U.S. soldiers serving abroad.

The workers, employees of Stone & Webster Construction Inc., timed their donations to coincide with Veterans’ Day (Nov. 11). “Hundreds of our workers contributed to this worthy cause,” said Stone & Webster site manager Graham Cross. “Management was greatly impressed with the selfless generosity displayed by our union employees.” Stone & Webster also contributed toward the campaign.

The $8,270 donation went to Mom’s Cookies Inc. (Willimington, Ill.), a public charity organization led by Deborah Trippiedi. Mom’s Cookies provides direct aid in the form of phone cards, individual care packages, holiday items, etc., to U.S. soldiers around the globe. “Our soldiers really appreciate being remembered by those of us at home, particularly at this time of the year. Everyone at Mom’s Cookies is grateful to Stone & Webster and its union workforce for remembering our troops abroad,” Trippiedi said.

Over 135 Boilermakers are working on a refueling outage at the nuclear power plant. According to Local 1 (Chicago) Vice President Robert Schwartz, the Boilermakers are working in highly-radioactive areas under extreme conditions, performing maintenance and modification activities. “This is a combined effort with all Boilermakers working together, including travelers, to get the job done safely, on time, and with no problems,” Schwartz reported.

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**Local 60 awards scholarships**

LOCAL 60 BM-ST Ed Hebert (Poona, Ill.) has presented the local’s third annual scholarship awards to relatives of Local 60 members. Receiving $500 awards were Abbi Bosnich, daughter of Paul Bosnich; Tavoni Bradly, daughter of Thomas Bradly; Kasey Cannon, granddaughter of David Cannon; Paul Guilliams, son of Paul Guilliams; Hannah and Jared Harrison, grandchildren of Eldon Harrison; Jared Hunt, son of Gary Hunt; Jamie Jacob, daughter of Don Jacobs; Michelle Landee, wife of Darren Landee; John Sondag, grandson of William Grayson; Clair Sack, daughter of Bruce Sack; and Christine Vincent, wife of Jeff Vincent.

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**Six L-73 depends win scholarships**

SIX DEPENDENTS OF Local 73 members (Halifax, Nova Scotia) are the lucky winners of a $500 education award from the Halifax/Dartmouth Offshore Industry Education Awards Program. Held in Toronto, Ontario, on Dec. 7, 2007, the annual drawing is conducted by the General Presidents’ Maintenance Committee for Canada and is funded by Jacobs Industrial Services Ltd.

Seventeen names were randomly drawn from the names of 62 eligible applicants. Each winner received $500, including six dependents of Local 73 members: Tert McComber, daughter of Kevin McComber; Katelyn Pelrine, daughter of Blaise Pelrine; Lindsay Myette, daughter of Willard Myette; Bronya Mebarg, daughter of John Mebarg; Karen Glenn, daughter of Myles Glenn; and Britten Myette, daughter of Willard Myette.

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L-154's Crawford wins bear hunt

Member's dream trip is televised on Escape to the Wild

TODD CRAWFORD, A member of Local 154 (Pittsburgh), loves to make people laugh, whether he is with friends or family, or creating an application video for Escape to the Wild, a TV show that surprises "hardworking" union members with the hunting or fishing trip of a lifetime.

"Escape to the Wild is a union-sponsored program that evolved from a relationship between the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership and a number of AFL-CIO-affiliated trade unions that recognized a majority of their members hunt, fish, and enjoy the outdoors. This same partnership led to the recently launched Union Sportsmen's Alliance, a hunting and fishing club for union members and their families."

When Crawford learned he could apply to win the trip of his dreams hunting black bear in Canada, he "took a shot in the dark" and sent an application video that included a segment in which he dressed in a ghillie suit (camouflage clothing designed to resemble heavy underbrush) near the forest's edge and scared the daylights out of his neighbor.

Crawford began hunting with his dad when he was 2 years old and always dreamed of hunting something larger than deer. He thought about hunting bear, "something that could hunt me back if it wanted to. It would be unbelievable," he said. With a son and daughter in college, such a hunt did not seem feasible. So when Crawford received a call on his cell and learned he was one of the candidates for a bear hunt, he nearly drove his truck off the road.

Crawford's dream hunt took him far north to Saskatchewan, where he discovered that hunting bear is a bit different than hunting deer. "I was kind of overwhelmed, since I was not experienced in judging the size of a bear very well," he said.

"The most important piece of advice my guide, John Woulfe, gave me was that if all the other bears around spook when another bear comes in sight... that's the bear you want."

He and Escape to the Wild host Tom Ackerman saw six bears the first night but passed them up, waiting for a bigger bear that had been seen in the area.

Crawford knew the bear he wanted was headed toward him on the second night, when others in the area took pictures.

"We saw a little bear climb 30 feet up a tree in about two seconds," said Crawford.

Success! Hunting a 300-pound black bear was definitely the highlight of Crawford's trip to Canada, but there was more to his experience than the hunt. "The people in Saskatchewan were so nice; it was unbelievable. That is going to stick with me forever. My thanks to the Woulfe family of Green Water Mearan Lake Outfitters for taking me into their home and treating me like family."

For Crawford, who joined the Boilermakers union six years ago, hunting is more than just a passion; it has made him better at his job. "Sitting in a tree stand for five or six hours in freezing weather... or standing on the bank of my favorite strip pond when it's 90 degrees makes a hundred casts... these things make it easier for me to do my part of my job like standing by the Ohio River in stormy weather; looking up structural steel or going into a boiler when it's well over 100 degrees to make a weld."

"It's truly an honor to host season two of Escape to the Wild," said host Tom Ackerman. "The winners are hardworking Americans who share a love of the outdoors and have gone the extra mile in their community, at home, or on the job. Todd is an intense, focused, determined hunter and a fun-loving practical joker who understands the importance of keeping America's hunting and fishing heritage alive."

"I enjoy hunting with young sportsmen; especially my son, passing along what I know, answering their questions, giving them some of my tackle or an old arrow rest," Crawford said. "More of us need to spend time with any younger who wants to learn. This is important not only to continue the traditions of sportsmanship, but it is also the union way of life."

Crawford's trip aired Jan. 25. To view other Escape to the Wild episodes, check your local television listings or go to youtube.com.

Bob Schwartz, Local 1 (Chicago) vice president and business agent, is now "Chief Schwartz."

Local 1 VP Schwartz named fire chief

Interest in fire fighting spans decades

AT LOCAL 1'S UNION hall in Chi- cago, Bob Schwartz is known as the lodge vice president, one of its business agents, and its training director. Sixty miles down the road, in the comfortable, small town of Shorewood, they have a new title for him—"chief."

Schwartz took on the title of fire chief for the Troy Fire Protection Dis- trict—which serves Shorewood, un- corporated Troy Township, and parts of Kendall County, near Joliet—soon after the death of Kerry Sheridan, who died in office (literally) after a half cen- tury as the district fire chief.

A 40-year Boilermaker, Schwartz grew up behind the original Troy Volunteer Fire Department "fire barn," according to the suburban Chicago Herald News. "As a youngster, when the fire bell would sound to sum- mon the volunteers, he would be the first there and would open the doors, turn on the lights, and start the trucks for the firefighters," the newspaper reported.

According to Schwartz, it was Sher- idan's wish that Schwartz succeed him as fire chief. "Nobody will ever fill his boots," Schwartz said. "But I'll walk in his footsteps."

Schwartz's enthusiasm for firefight- ing is surpassed only by his devo- tion to the Boilermakers and labor. "When you do something to help people, it feels good," he said. Referr- ing to his role as Local 1 training director, he stated: "When you teach an apprentice and see him strike that arc and run a nice little bead, that's an awesome feeling."

Schwartz's service to his union also includes roles as labor co-chair for the Exelon GPA Powerhouse Area Com- mittee and recording secretary of the Will-Grundy Building Trades Council. He has also served as a judge for the National Boilermaker Apprentice Com- petition as well as the Great Lakes and Northeast Area Apprentice of the Year Contest. In addition, he has represented Local 1 at three International Conven- tions, where he has served on the Rules Committee and as a sergeant at arms.

Local 112 presents an award to United Way liaison Pat Rabbett

MEMBERS OF LOCAL 112 (Mobile, Ala.) presented an award to United Way liaison Pat Rabbett at their August meeting for her tireless and unwavering support following Hurri- cane Katrina.

"Pat is a member of the Communi- cation Workers of America and is the AFL-CIO community services liai- son for the United Way of Southwest Alabama," reported Curtis Brooks, BM-ST for Local 112. "Mrs. Rabbett served with the Boilermakers and was instrumental in providing Local 112 with the sources for distribution of supplies in order to meet the needs of the people who were devastated by Hurricane Katrina."

Local 112 honors United Way liaison

Members thank Pat Rabbett for her efforts following Hurricane Katrina

One of the costliest and deadliest hurricanes in U.S. history, Katrina hit the Gulf Coast in August 2005. Fol- lowing the storm, the Boilermakers union secured work permits with Northrop-Grumman so they could deliver supplies into areas still under National Guard control. Mrs. Rabbett told them the United Way had sup- plies ready to deliver, however, the organization faced waiting periods of three to five days to enter disas- ter-stricken areas. Local 112 volun- teers worked 10- and 12-hour days to load and drive trucks with Boilermak- ers supplies as well as supplies from United Way and other groups. In all, the members drove more than 35,000 miles and delivered over 225 tons of purchased and donated prod- ucts—everything from baby food to mattresses.
Grateful for L-108 support, company names rod the Boilermaker 8018 B2

LOCAL 108 BOILERMAKERS (Birmingham, Ala.) played a key role in the development of a new alloy welding rod designed specifically for use in the power generation industry. The new rod comes in a shorter length: 12 inches instead of the standard 14. The shorter length allows the welder to burn the rod without bending it to reach restrictive areas. Too often when a rod is bent, part of the rod is discarded, leading to unnecessary waste.

The shorter length of the new Boilermaker 8018 B2 welding rod lets a welder work in tight spots with less rod waste.

With 900 locations in 48 states, Airgas is the largest distributor of welding equipment in North America. After a quick review, Breckenridge contacted Hobart Brothers, a manufacturer and distributor of welding equipment and accessories located in Troy, Ohio. Hobart has a distribution manager, Bob Wiscombe, to study the problem. Wiscombe found the existing rods had inadequate qualities and were causing porosity — the passage of gas or liquid through pores or interstices. He concluded that a new rod should be developed — one designed primarily for tube welding, that would provide a wider amp range and be easy to start and restart.

Wiscombe then contacted Local 108 for their help in developing the rod. Local 108 Bus. Mgr. Charlie Gamble and L-108 welding instructors Bob Henson and Joel Miller extensively tested rods throughout the development process. Engineers worked through 31 different formulas before arriving at the final product.

After nearly 12 months, the final testing was performed at Local 108’s training facility, where the final product was appropriately named the Boilermaker 8018 B2. Gamble, Henson, and Miller performed the final testing on Oct. 17. Observers included Southern Company’s craft labor specialist Shawn Curtis; Alabama Power’s welding engineers Marty Sims and Andy Godley; Airgas reps Breckenridge and Frank Sartain; and Hobart reps Wiscombe, Morrett, Mike Arrington, and Hao Guo.

Sartain, who serves as regional vice president for Airgas, described the welding rod’s development as “a joint effort all the way. We’ve taken a tripartite [maker, supplier, user] approach to create and perfect this pressure rod.”

Morrett, product manager for Hobart, is excited about the new rod’s potential use. “The less-experienced welders need something they can work with, and this is it,” he said.

Gamble is grateful for being allowed input in a product that will make the Boilermaker even more efficient on the job. “This rod in a Boilermaker stinger will equal a good weld,” he said. “You want to be pleasantly surprised when you light up a rod; that’s what will sell it.”

Hobart develops new welding rod 

The shorter length of the new Boilermaker 8018 B2 welding rod lets a welder work in tight spots with less rod waste.

Top apprentices earn recognition at the Local 146 anniversary celebration. L. to r. are Sheena Binette (2nd-year welder), Brent Tochey (3rd-year Blmkr.), Ricky Sens (entry-level Blmkr.), and Jarediah Bradley (3rd-year welder).

Local 146 celebrates 60 years

Members honor apprentices, long-term service

MORE THAN 500 people gathered at the Delta Inn South Jan. 26 to commemorate the 1948 chartering of Local 146 (Edmonton, Alberta). Members and their families as well as industry representatives from the owner, contractor, and union communities enjoyed a dinner and musical celebration.

Cosco Engineering and Fabrication, the first shop signatory to Local 146, under the name of Sparling Davis, hosted the bar during the reception in honor of their 60-year relationship with Local 146. To help visualize the lodge’s rich history, two jumbo screens displayed photos so members could reminisce and remember “the good old days.” Pins recognizing long-term membership were presented to 207 members, and special recognition was given to 44 graduate apprentices.

Local 146 BM-ST Warren Fraleigh acknowledged the honorees for their hard work. “Your efforts have not been in vain. As a direct result of your contributions, there is a brilliant future ahead for Local 146,” he said. Fraleigh also recognized the spouses and family members for their support and the sacrifices they make on behalf of the members who have to work away from home.

Following the dinner and awards, the Rum Brothers, a Vegas cabaret-type show, provided music and laughs for the attendees.


Hobart product mgr. Bruce Morrett gets a close-up look at tube welding.
**NEWS at a GLANCE**

**AMERICAN UNIONS SAW the biggest jump in membership in nearly 30 years in 2007, as the Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported. A total of 311,000 workers joined or organized unions, raising the total of all union members to 15.7 million. The health care sector accounted for the largest increase—142,000 members. The construction industry pulled in 96,000, raising union density in that sector from 13.3 percent in 2006 to 13.9 percent last year. More unions added members than were lost to bleeding, losing 287,000 more jobs, 93,000 of them union positions. Women accounted for three of five new jobs in 2007, and now make up 44 percent of all union members, a new record.**

**Foreign labor costs on rise**

A NEW REPORT shows the average hourly compensation costs for manufacturing workers in 32 foreign economies increased by 62 percent of what U.S. companies paid in 2000, up from 79 percent in 2005.

**No future for FutureGen?**

FUTUREGEN, A PUBLIC-PRIVATE alliance that decided last December it would build “the world’s first coal-fueled, near-zero emissions power plant,” has run out of fuel itself. On Jan. 46, the U.S. Department of Energy announced it was pulling out of the project, taking with it $8.3 billion in federal funding. The decision leaves the dozen private energy companies that had partnered with DOE under sufficient funds to proceed. The project was to have been located in Mattoon, Ill.

DOE says its decision was based on escalating project costs and doubts about the commercial viability of the project, which would have used integrated gasification and combined cycle (IGCC) technology to convert coal into a gas and remove impurities. The Illinois congressional delegation has vowed to fight the DOE decision.

**Welders may lose smell**

WELDERS WORKING in confined spaces without adequate ventilation may lose their sense of smell acutely, according to a new study by the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. The study’s author, Richard Doty, PhD, gave “scratch and sniff” tests to 43 professional welders. Nearly 40 percent of the welders had lost their sense of smell completely. Blood tests showed that 40 percent of the welders had abnormally high levels of manganese (Mn). Interestingly, those with the highest Mn levels “smelled better” than those with the lowest.

**Judge balks at Delphi bonuses**

HOW BIG SHOULD your bonus be for leading your corporation into bankruptcy? Executives at Delphi Corp., the world’s second-largest auto supplier that filed Chapter 11 in 2005, proposed $87 million for the executives as part of the company’s reorganization plan. The United Auto Workers and other unions representing Delphi workers protested vehemently, having suffered through plant closings, job cuts, and slashed wages and benefits. A bankruptcy judge said he would approve the bonuses provided the execs reduced their bonuses to $16.5 million. Perhaps the judge should have fired some executives rather than giving them any reward at all?

**9/11 still claiming lives**

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS who worked at Ground Zero following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York continue to die from illnesses they contracted at the site, according to a Public Employees’ Pres. a publication of AFSCME District Council 37. EMS and other first responders breathed toxic air, laden with asbestos and fumes from burning chemicals, dust, and human bodies. Some EMS victims are developing respiratory illnesses and cancer and are dying in their early 40s.

**Stimulate this!**

AS THE WHITE House and Congress debate how and whether to stimulate the economy, some economists believe the government should stimulate the economy by giving consumers money that is domestically produced so that the spending power doesn’t go elsewhere.

CNW’s Lau Dobs, writing about the economy on Jan. 23, offered this bit of wisdom in response: “Just what would you have us spend it on?” The truth is that consumers spend most of their money on foreign imports, and any stimulus package probably would be stimulating foreign economies rather than our own. Dobs may be right, but perhaps consumers should consider quality U.S. products made by Boilermakers, such as McGregor golf clubs, a Whirlpool refrigerator, or a Conn-Selmer band instrument.

**DEBATE**

continued from p. 4

Movement must do more to push our governments and private industries to make it happen, and America must lead the effort. Half-measures simply won’t cut it. The choice is abundantly clear: Pay now, or we will indeed pay dearly later.

**Local S8 reaches out to community**

MEMBERS OF LOCAL S8 (Equality, Ill.) spent their Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays helping others. They hosted a food drive, organized by Stewart Tony Young. Members donated canned goods, potatoes, flour, stuffing, and all the supplies a family would need to prepare a Thanksgiving meal. Local S8 donated an additional $300 to buy canned goods, and the Big Ridge Company, a Local S8 employer, provided turkeys and bread. In all, the members prepared 144 baskets for distribution by area churches and WADI, a local food pantry. They also donated another five truckloads of canned goods to WADI.

For Christmas, they continued the spirit of giving by participating in two local programs: Share Your Blessings and Shop with a Cop. Many Local S8 members elected to have $25 withheld from their checks for these programs. The Big Ridge Company matched the amount raised by its employees, and Local S8 donated $1,130. Together, they raised $13,000 for each of the programs.

**Local S8 and the Big Ridge Co.**

Local S8 and the Big Ridge Co. donate $15,000 to the Share Your Blessings Program. L. to r., Todd Cavender and Nathan Moore of the Arkansas Police Officers Assoc. Local 156, and I-S8 steward Tony Young; back row, Richie Phillips and Tim Ward of the Big Ridge Co., and USW Pres. Greg Fort.

**Local S8 and the Big Ridge Co.**

Local S8 and the Big Ridge Co. donate $15,000 to the Share Your Blessings Program. L. to r., Todd Cavender and Nathan Moore of the Arkansas Police Officers Assoc. Local 156, and I-S8 steward Tony Young; back row, Richie Phillips and Tim Ward of the Big Ridge Co., and USW Pres. Greg Fort and steward Tony Young.
Local 1 — Chicago

John Skermont, BM-ST of Local 1, Chicago, reports presentation of membership pins to the following:
- 40 Years — Robert Maus;
- 35 Years — Donald Kitchen; and
- 30 Years — Daniel Berg, Timothy Craddock, Darrall Halsey, Frank Koteles, Jeffrey Murphy, Michael Murphy, Robert Papineau, and James Shue.

Local 7 — Buffalo, N.Y.

Joseph Brown, BM-ST of Local 7, Buffalo, N.Y., reports presentation of membership pins to the following:
- 65 Years — E. Choyne;
- 60 Years — W. Walsh;
- 55 Years — E. Principie;
- 50 Years — R. Dobson, R. Shannon, J.T. Stocklosa;
- 35 Years — J. Battaglia, R. Brushingham, J.T. Motak Sr., C.A. Mulholland, C.E. Mulholland, D. Vogt;
- 30 Years — M. Mann; and
- 25 Years — J. Papaix.

Local 13 — Philadelphia

James Banford, BM-ST of Local 13, Philadelphia, reports presentation of membership pins to the following:
- 55 Years — James Banford Sr., James A. Benjamin, Robert Finn Sr., James Murphy, Arnold Suter;
- 50 Years — Peter P. Mullanigan;
- 45 Years — Cimino, Charles Focht;
- 40 Years — Roy Murray, Frank Seiverd, Daniel Streka, George Tobin;
- 30 Years — Earl Attix, Joseph Bartolacci, John Carroll, Robert Carrow, Leon Ciferri, Roger Davis, Walter C. Davis Jr., Alan Layou, Andrew Long III, Michael Mangam, Gary Montgomery, Avery Shetzel, Herb Slaughter, Dennis Smith, Steven Sweeney, Alex Tallick, Mark Wilson, John Wyatt;
- 25 Years — Frank Benda, Richard Blitz, David Butts, Joseph Carlisle, Joseph Clark, William Drobinski, William Ellsworth Jr., Jerry Ervin, Thomas Finn;
- 20 Years — David Anderson, James Ciferri, Robert Czyz Jr., Michael (Don) Hartman, Roy Montross; and
- 15 Years — Thomas Bray, Clarence Butler III, Darrin Clark, Kris Coole, Robert Goheen, Clay Hartman III, Al Pale, Scott Werkheiser, and Art Wilson Jr.

Local 37 — New Orleans

David Hegeman, BM-ST of Local 37, New Orleans, reports presentation of membership pins to the following:
- 60 Years — Hilton Billott;
- 50 Years — Dominic Cannino, Russell Cannino, Peter Greco, Gene Lellanc, Paul Nicolois, Felix Ruiz;
- 45 Years — Phillip Ramos;
- 35 Years — Stanley Dupuy, Marcos Lopez, Yockey Patcheco, Melvin Pichon, Joe Pittman Jr., Thomas Thibodeaux, Raymond Zitzman;
- 30 Years — Sam Davis, Carl Duty, Louis Colasso, Charles Goldston, Allen Malley, Charles Morgan, Kenneth Thompson; and
- 25 Years — Lester Alfonso, Larry Chapoton, Shleton McMillan.

Local 60 — Peoria, Ill.

Ed Herbst, BM-ST of Local 60, Peoria, Ill., reports presentation of membership pins to the following:
- 60 Years — Rudy Kocacevic;

Local 45 — St. Louis, Mo.

50 Years — Rondell Barnes, Dave Cannon, O’Neil Roberts, Charlie Shonkwiler;

40 Years — Lyle Ballard, Rich Chavez, Bill Crum, Jack Dobbins, Gene Ebert, Monte Emmons, Mike George, Kenney Laws, Dave Lindsey, Rick Lunsford, Bill Riley, Jim Scobell, Russ Webber, Stan Wolfe;

35 Years — Don Barbour, Carl Johnson, Mike Jones, Bob Miskell;

30 Years — Don Abel, Don Barbour, Tom Braddy, Rick Bradshaw, Tom Bussey, Larry Couch, Bud Crawford, Dale DeRose, Dan Fischer, Denny Granger, Dwight Harrison, Ed Hebert, Mel Hill, John Mason, Jim Mooney, Mike Mooney, Kim Moore, Tony Reese, John Rogers, Ron Rose, Bruce Sack, Buzz Sawyer, Larry Schaab, Bob Sears, Dale Staples, Bud Tarnley, Dave Vescogno, Jeff Vincent, Jeff Wallace, Willis Watkins, Eddy Weatherford, Dave Weber, Scott Wilson, Randy Wright, Bob Yates.

See next page
Local 146 — Edmonton

Local 141 — Victoria

Local 374 — Hammond, Ind.

Local 374 BM-ST Paul Maday (r.) presents a 60-year membership pin to Virgil R. Plowman.


20 YEARS — Bill Goreva, Ed Goreva, Tom Goreva, and
15 YEARS — Dave Burress, and Bernard Martin.

Local 146 — Edmonton

Warren Fraleigh, BM-ST of Local 146, Edmonton, Alberta, reports presentation of membership pins to the following:

55 YEARS — Paul Vaseylekno;
50 YEARS — Teddy Arsenault, Paul Van-delle, Danilo Cocquio, Henry Gusse, Virgil R. Plowman, Brian McKeen, Orrost Olineck, Alex Parmitus, Andrew Uchal, Jan Pedersen, and Werner Scholl;
45 YEARS — Kevin Keith;
40 YEARS — Kris Brems Sr., Joe Cholach, Gary Fiela, Roland Labossiere, Den-nis Norris, Keith Norris, Stan Web;
35 YEARS — Dennis Drayt, William Keay, Chris McEwen, David Pruss;

Local 191 — Victoria

Bill Morrison, BM-ST of Local 191, Victoria, British Columbia, reports presentation of membership pins to the following:

55 YEARS — Gordon “Corky” Bryant, Howie East, Art Holland;
50 YEARS — Tom McCuaig;
45 YEARS — Frank Izak, Ralph Thompson;
40 YEARS — Ken Hancock;
35 YEARS — Reo Curtis, Henry Flata, Freeman McGaghey, Carl Saurikettu;
25 YEARS — Pat Carlson, Scott Cooper, Randal Defrange, Mark Dolhy, Jim Fitz-patrick, Ken Francis, Jim Greer, Bruce Griffiths, Ken Hansen, George Hie, Denny Jaromy, Rick Jolih, Doug Jones, Judy Kujundzic, Gordon Lewis, Rod Rodgers, Alan Max-well, Alan Morrison, Steve Patton, John Prentice, Terry Prolemy, David Richardson, Karl Rohde, Les Sainsbury, Jamie Scroggie, Randy Thompson, Wil-liam Wong, Robert Woodford, and
20 YEARS — Gerry Chisholm, Trevor Hill, Glenn McGowan, Kelly Nell-estyn, and John Perry.

L-374 — Hammond, Ind.

Paul Maday, BM-ST of Local 374, Hammond, Ind., reports presentation of membership pins to the following:

60 YEARS — Oreille Peckenbaugh, Vir-gil R. Plowman;
50 YEARS — Kenneth D. Angotti, William H. Lynn;
20 YEARS — Joseph T. Greenwell, Charles R. Striniitt, Thomas M. Stodola, and

55 YEARS — Arthur Speece;
Phil Dine book says labor still relevant

Labor reporter assesses the decline of unions — and their chances for survival

PHIL DINE IS something of a rarity in journalistic circles. As a labor reporter for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, he has spent much of the last two decades covering organized labor. Most commercial newsmakers across the country did away with labor reporters years ago — and that, Dine says, is a mistake. Labor beat as an add-on to a reporter’s regular assignments. That’s why Dine’s new book, “State of the Unions: How Labor Can Strengthen the Middle Class, Improve Our Economy, and Regain Political Influence” (McGraw-Hill, 2007), deserves a close look by anyone who cares about labor unions.

Dine is the real deal, a reporter who jumped into the trenches with organized labor, writing about its achievements as well as its failures, its champions as well as its culprits. He has documented the struggles of rank-and-file union members and their leadership at the local, regional, and national levels. And he has observed keenly the forces — internal as well as external — that threaten labor’s existence. In the process, Dine has twice been nominated for Pulitzer Prize awards for labor coverage.

Who is to assess labor’s decline and identify strategies for its survival? Dine’s assessment is grim: He writes, “A powerful labor movement that once moved workers into the middle class is now powerless to prevent people from falling out of it.” This statement may be over-general, but it certainly applies to millions of workers — especially in the manufacturing sector — whose jobs have been shipped overseas.

Bad trade deals, hostile labor boards, and an indifferent, biased media all factor into labor’s decline. Dine concedes. But labor itself is not without fault. In Dine’s view, unions have not made their issue a part of the American dialogue. “What’s puzzling about labor’s failure to deliver its message,” he writes, “is that most people agree with almost all of its policy goals.” He adds, “The lack of an effective voice has had three far-reaching consequences for labor: it has jeopardized labor’s survival.”

Dine says the fire fighters’ discipline, unity, and organizational skills were responsible for producing an unexpected turnout for Kerry, surprising political pundits as well as the labor movement. And they must become walking billboards for union excellence both on the job site and in the community.

In short, to survive in the 21st century, laborers must change, adapt, and thrive — and thrive — in a rapidly changing industry.

THE DAYS OF union dominance in the construction industry are long gone, observes Mark Breslin, author of “Survival of the Fittest.” Labor’s share of the construction marketplace has shriveled to a mere 15 percent of the available work. Not that long ago, the building trades dominated with an 85 percent share.

But Breslin isn’t one to wring his hands or wishfully long for the old days. Survival of the Fittest instead offers practical, useful advice as opposed to the individual union member. His book is an everyday guide that should appeal to the newest apprentice as well as the most veteran journeyman.

Breslin writes in a conversational style that makes it easy to zoom through the book’s 162 pages in a few hours. He covers the bases well in 16 quick-read chapters that address such topics as responsibility, commitment, attitude, money, and success. He devotes individual chapters to apprentices and foremen.

The essential theme running through the book is that for union construction to survive and recapture lost market share, individual unions must step forward and prove everyday they are the most skilled, most reliable, and hardest working employees available. They must demonstrate that their level of excellence justifies higher compensation than their nonunion counterparts. And they must become walking billboards for union excellence both on the job site and in the community.

Breslin admits that change is hard for many people, but stresses there is no room for number two in construction, only number one will thrive, and the benefits of being number one — higher wages, better benefits, and respect — will be worth the effort.

No stranger to the construction business, Breslin is a fourth-generation contractor turned consultant, author, and speaker. He has addressed numerous labor organizations in North America — including the Boilermakers’ winter construction conference in 2006 and the tripartite conference in 2007.

The Boilermaker Reporter reviewed Breslin’s earlier book, Organize or Die in the Jan-Mar 2007 issue (page 15). Learn more about Survival of the Fittest and Organize or Die online at www.breslin.biz; by phone at 866-351-6275; or by writing to Mark Breslin, 2415 San Ramon Valley Blvd., #230, San Ramon, CA 94583.

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Guide offers frank appraisal of what it takes for individuals to survive — and thrive — in a rapidly changing industry

STARTING IN MAY, more than 130 million households will begin receiving economic stimulus payments of between $300 to $600 if single and $600 to $1,200 if married filing jointly. You are eligible if you have a valid Social Security number and at least $3,000 of income in 2007, but you must file a 2007 income tax return to receive your check. Millions of retirees, disabled veterans, and low-wage earners who ordinarily don’t file income tax returns are eligible. If you are exempt from filing a return, file one for 2007 anyway. Your rebate is calculated based on this return, and filing one is the only way you will receive it.

If you owe no income taxes, the return, and filing one is the only way you will receive it. You must file a tax return to get your stimulus check.

For more information on the economic stimulus program, visit the IRS Web site — www.irs.gov — and click on the “Rebate Questions?” link.

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If you owe no income taxes, the only way you will receive a stimulus check is by filing a tax return. You must file a tax return to get your stimulus check.
**ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORTS OF NATIONAL FUNDS**

**BOILERMAKER-BLACKSMITH NATIONAL PENSION TRUST**

This is a summary of the annual report for the Boilermaker-Blacksmith National Pension Trust, Employer Identification Number 48-6168020, for Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2006.

The annual report has been filed with the Department of Labor, as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

**BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Benefits under the plan are provided by trust and insurance. Plan expenses were $837,725,811. These expenses include $34,146,076 in administrative expenses and $550,579,710 in benefits paid to participants and beneficiaries. A total of 73,139 persons were participants in or beneficiaries of the plan at the end of the plan year, although not all of these persons had yet earned the right to receive benefits.

The value of plan assets, after subtracting liabilities of the plan, was $7,451,200,846 as of Dec. 31, 2006, compared to $8,843,750,870 as of Jan. 1, 2006. During the plan year, the plan experienced an increase in its net assets of $807,449,076.

This increase includes unrealized appreciation in the value of plan assets, that is, the difference between the value of the plan’s assets at the end of the year and the value of the assets at the beginning of the year, or the cost of assets acquired during the year.

The plan had total income of $1,145,175,787. This includes employer contributions of $2,233,302,244, gains of $807,177,613 from the sale of assets, net earnings from investments of $84,693,525, and other income of $2,935,015.

**MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARDS**

An actuary’s statement shows that enough money was contributed to the plan to keep it funded in accordance with the minimum funding standards of ERISA.

**BOILERMAKERS NATIONAL HEALTH & WELFARE FUND**

This is a summary of the annual report of the Boilermakers National Health and Welfare Fund, Employer Identification Number 36-6090964, for the fiscal year ending Dec. 31, 2006. The annual report has been filed with the Department of Labor, as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

The Boilermakers National Health and Welfare Fund has committed itself to pay certain medical, dental, vision, and prescription drug claims incurred under the terms of the plan.

**INSURANCE INFORMATION**

The plan has contracts with the Standard Insurance Company and Metropolitan Life Insurance Company to pay all disability, life, and accidental death and dismemberment claims. The total premiums paid for the plan year ending Dec. 31, 2006 were $6,338,508. Because the contract with the Standard Insurance Company is a so-called “experience-rated” contract, the premium costs are affected by, among other things, the number and size of claims. Of the total insurance premiums paid for the plan year ending Dec. 31, 2006, the premiums paid under this experience-rated contract were $2,160,558 and the total of all benefit claims paid under this experience-rated contract during the plan year was $2,039,317.

**BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The value of plan assets, after subtracting liabilities of the plan, was $233,801,050 as of Dec. 31, 2006, compared to $148,843,341 as of Jan. 1, 2006. During the plan year, the plan experienced an increase in its net assets of $117,950,307. This increase includes unrealized appreciation or depreciation in the value of plan assets, that is, the difference between the value of the plan’s assets at the end of the year and the value of the assets at the beginning of the year, or the cost of assets acquired during the year.

During the plan year, the plan had total income of $4,979,762.

**FUNDING STANDARDS**

Enough money was contributed to the plan to keep it funded in accordance with the minimum funding standards of ERISA.

**ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORTS OF NATIONAL FUNDS**

**YOU MAY REQUEST A COPY**

You have the right to receive a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, for each of these funds on request. The items listed below are included in each report:

1. An accountant’s report;
2. Information and financial information on payments to service providers;
3. Assets held for investment; and
4. Transitions in excess of five percent of plan assets.

In addition, the Boilermaker-Blacksmith National Pension Trust summary annual report will include the following:

- Information, including sales commissions paid by insurance carriers;
- Information regarding any common or collective trusts, pooled separate accounts; master trusts, or 103-12 investment entities in which the plan participates;
- Actuarial information regarding the funding of the plan.

**FAQs about the Boilermakers National Funds**

**How do I apply for spousal death benefits and pension?**

WHEN A BOILERMAKER member passes away, a surviving spouse or the next of kin may have many questions and concerns about death benefits and the member’s pension. The Boilermakers National Funds office makes it easy for survivors to apply for these benefits. Simply make one call to the Boilermakers National Funds Customer Care Center at 1-888-342-6555, Mon. through Fri. (8 a.m. to 4 p.m. CST)

- Be sure to have ready the following information: 1) name of the deceased, 2) date of death, 3) Social Security number of the deceased, and 4) name and address of the surviving spouse or next of kin.

The Customer Care Center will pass this information to representatives in each fund. These representatives will facilitate the death claim process for pension, annuity, and health and welfare. They will also handle applications for extended health insurance coverage for those eligible.
WITH DEEP SORROW the International Brotherhood records the death of these members as reported to the International Secretary-Treasurer’s office, and extends its heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved families.

Intl. Meyers, Virginia 5斯塔吉奇, 理查德 13 Сзворковски, А.
Intl. Simmons, Robert 5韦加, 威廉 13 吉苏舍, 查尔斯
Intl. Smith Jr., Otha 6阿胡玛达, 路易斯·G. 13 哈里森, 杰
Intl. Strandt, Patricia 6科文, 马文 13 马伦, 莫
Intl. Wilson, Valeria 6格雷布尔, 泰德more 13 聂格特, 乔治
NTEL Babco, Alexander 6汉森, 雷蒙德 13 奥尔格, 桑德
NTEL Cast, Claude 6哈尔, 斯坦利 13 理查德森, 爱德华
NTEL Dunn, Gary 6赫斯利, 路易斯 13 斯彭斯, 詹姆斯
NTEL Gant, Earnest 6约翰斯顿, 威廉 13万内特, 帕特里克·R.
NTEL Harper, Gary 6马丁, 诺兰 26科普派, 斯特, 阿瑟
NTEL Hendrick, Howard 6马丁, 埃德加 26凯斯勒, 卡尔
NTEL Jennings, Okaw 6梅登斯, 曼索尔 26齐特罗瑟, 海伦特
NTEL Monnier, Kim 6米尼奥, 阿方索 27卡罗尔, 杰瑞
NTEL Parker, Daniel 6卡佩里亚, 弗朗西斯科 27泰纳, 卡罗尔
NTEL Ralph, James R. 6佩里茨, 菲利普斯 28安德森, 西莱
NTEL Snyder, Fred 6帕奇, 罗杰 28安德森, 温斯顿
NTEL Valde, Alan E. 6昆内斯, 曼索尔 28比弗, 威廉
NTEL Wayman, Kenneth 6里德, 埃里克 28卡内利, 乔
1 Anderson, Robert H. 6施耐弗, 埃里克 28楚, 约翰
1 Bezic, John 6史密斯, 皮特 28克申, 约翰
1 Carlson, Oke 6沃尔纳, 托马斯 28格林, 切斯特
1 Kinan, Henry 6威廉斯, S.E. 29布雷迪, 威廉
1 Kolesky, Eugene 6温德, 杜鲁门 29布鲁斯特, 罗伯特
1 Kruse, Bradley 7布扎尔斯基, 迈克尔 29卡利, 阿尔伯特
1 Rays, Sarkis 7霍兰德, 约翰 29德格雷戈里奥, 罗科
1 Williams, Robert 7约翰逊, 弗兰克 29纳森, 查德
4 Black, Herman 7圣加梅因, 达尔顿 29里奇, 尼尔
5 Baltich, Daniel 10马特森, 罗纳尔德 29瓦伦奇尼, F.
5 Bancroft, William 13阿普洛格, 杰森 30史密斯, 韦恩
5 Forni, Fabio 13贝科夫, 哈维 37卡罗尔, 弗雷德
5 Nostrom, Donald 13克拉克, J.R. 37克鲁, 雷蒙德
37 梅克, 托马斯
38 洛佩兹, 里查德
40 丹顿, 查尔斯
40 海普, Z.L.
43 詹姆斯, 戴维
45 约翰斯顿, 本森
45 涅维尔, 杰夫
46 萨尔斯, 约翰
50 马尼, 伊文
51 汤姆, 贾
52 罗伯特, 埃内斯·F.
52 马克维克, 罗伯特
53 麦当劳, 拉里
54 史密斯, 彼特
55 韦尔, 罗伯特
59 韦弗, 拉尔夫·P.
60 威尔德, 哈罗德
61 克罗威尔, 克林顿
62 兰格, 兰里
63 梅里, 杰夫
64 索尔, J.V.
64 托雷丁, 西尔维奥
64 韦尔奇, 布莱恩
64 韦尔奇, 伊恩
64 霍弗, 艾伦
66 罗奇, 沃尔
67 桑德斯, 彼特
68 阿克德, 克里斯
68 廷登, 罗斯·J.
69 卡洛琳, 乔沙
70 考伦, 乔
71 克拉克, 内尼
71 克莱门斯, 约翰
72 科布, 美洛·A.
73 格里夫斯, 杰姆
73 格里姆, 伦纳德
73 海桑, 朱森
74 马特维奇, 爱德华
74 蒙斯特莱曼, 莱尔
74 尼利, 比尔
74 弗塞伊, 邓内尔
74 希普利, 埃德华
74 史密斯, 布博
74 威廉斯, 伊万
74 贝尔, 唐纳德
74 麦尔, 达尔
75 施内贝尔, 埃文
75 塞普, 巴里·H.
75 塔卡莫托, 保罗
76 比舍普, 比尔
76 布拉科夫斯基, 德怀恩
76 卡萨达, 威廉
76 戴维斯, 保罗·D.
77 迪克森, 乔·D.
77 东米涅兹, 伊德华
77 埃切瓦里亚, 托马斯
77 吉尔斯皮, 雷克斯
77 伊文, 伊雷特
77 贾维尔, 查尔斯
77 杰恩斯, 亚
77 卢仁, 曼索尔
77 卢内, 阿方索
77 麦德, 奥利弗
77 蒙特斯, 乔
77 诺兰, 乔治
78 皮尔斯, 约
78 罗德里格斯, 巴尔多ificados
78 罗梅罗, 威廉
79 索尼格, 沃尔
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83 罗德里格斯, 巴尔多ificados
83 罗梅罗, 威廉
See IST Deaths page 23

**Note:** Members are eligible. Some programs are not available to members outside the continental United States, and not all programs are available in all states.

Phone 1-800-452-9425 for clarification of eligibility.
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.

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<td>85</td>
<td>Meyers, Virginia A.</td>
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IN MEMORIAM

IF YOU HAVE NOT yet been furnished this information, contact your local lodge, secure

85 Karns, John J. 15,000.00
46391_P01_24x.indd 22
13 VanWert, Patrick R. 6,000.00
13 Turner Jr., Ray* 4,000.00
6 Taylor, Leroy E. 6,000.00
6 Pereyra, Francisco 6,000.00
6 Stephens, Conrad 6,000.00
6 Taylor, Leroy E. 6,000.00
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7 St. Germaine, Dalton 6,000.00
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Continued from p. 21

IST-reported deaths

146 Bagirkan, Nurcan
146 Block, Gordon
146 Bogle, Newton A.
146 Convery, James
146 Emborg, Wallace
146 Jose, David
146 Laliberte, Alfred
146 Melville, Lorne
146 McNeil, Cameron, Joseph
146 Samson, William
146 Savid, Roy
151 Banister Jr, William G.
154 Beegle, Richard
154 Bey, Fred
154 Harte Sr, Donald
154 Litzinger, William
154 Meehan Jr, William
154 Nicholas, Robert
154 Parks, Thomas
154 Piszczor, Bernard
154 Bandy, William
154 Glass, Earl W.
154 Sheets, Louis
154 Leds, Elmer
154 Card, Robert
156 Decoteau, Louis E.
156 Marko, Raymond
156 Navez, James
156 Skowronski, Ronald
156 Timchac, James
156 Usher Jr, Richard
156 Wynn, James L.
157 Babbick, Stanley
157 Brown, Willard
157 Decker, Ken
157 Hoffarth, Dale
157 Wittmer, Michael L.
159 Thorne, Murray
159 Wilson, George
159 Scowden Sr, Walter
159 Estes, James
159 Hicks, Raymond L.
159 Morris, Charles
159 Murphy, James
159 Proffitt, Sonny
159 Crouch, Chester
159 Radabaugh, Richard
159 Richey, Ron
159 LaMar, Danny
159 Sampson, Ralph
159 Douglas, James
159 Nettles, Lexis
159 Piwinski, Anthony
159 Codi, Rodney
159 Craig, David
159 Fuchshara, Mike
159 Graydon, Glynn
159 Hadley, Lloyd
159 Kang, Gundisal
159 Manning, Darrell
159 McKe, Joseph
159 Petersen, Ernest
159 Sonnalsa, Horst
159 Volkmann, Karl R.
159 Wilson, Henry
159 Winder, Robert E.
159 Dutkocher, Lawrence
159 Niepoorter, Dwayin
159 Byers, Thomas
159 Davis, Paul W.
159 Eger, Bernard
159 Faulkenberg, Jeffrey
159 Franks Jr, Chester
159 Jackson, Randolph
159 Lindauer, Leroy
159 Peter, James
159 Pizzuto, John
159 Russell, Richard
159 Salakar, Thomas
159 Sparks, Larry
159 D381 Roberts, S.
135 Grobar, Martin
135 Schuler, Harold
135 Sisco, Harold
135 Bronow, Leo
135 Brooks, Carmel
135 Brown, Harold
135 Callcox, Chad
135 Cornell, Robert
135 Freeman, Floyd
135 Johnson, Gary
135 Lambert, Edmond
135 Lofly, Larry
135 Roberson, Calvin
135 Ward, Richard
135 D435 Smith Jr, Everett
135 Burto, Wallace J
140 Comand, Lawrence
140 Kasten, Herbert L.
140 Rass, Clarence
145 Byrd, Steven
145 Evans, James
145 Johnson, T.C.
145 Killian, Benny
145 Nicholson, Shawn
145 Phillips, George
145 Smelser, George
145 Greet, Edwin
145 Townsel, Paul
145 Voss, Rayford D.
145 Woolley, Kelly
145 Laverdue, Ernest
145 Waithurst, Michael
145 Camp, Vernor
145 Firth, Thomas
145 Mitchell, James P.
145 Anthony, Marc
145 Benson, Robert
145 Commissio, Joseph
145 Gossage, Thomas
145 Johnson, Norvell
145 King, Lawrence

IN MEMORIAM

Jan • Mar 2008                             the Boilermaker Reporter - 23

Moving? Tell us where...

Name
New Address
City
State of Province Zip
Local Lodge No. Register No.
E-Mail Address

Mail form to:
International Brotherhood of
Boilermakers Union
753 State Avenue, Suite 505
Kansas City, KS 66101

(Allow five weeks for change of address.)

(Also please notify the secretary of your local lodge.)
Barack Obama is exciting voters as no candidate has done in decades.

WE IN THE EXECUTIVE Council recognize that not every Boilermaker member will agree with our endorsement. People are vastly different, and good people may disagree. We came to our decision after studying all of the candidates — not only the positions they will advocate, but the attitudes toward working people and unions they have demonstrated, and continue to demonstrate, through their actions and their accessibility.

I ask that all of you take the same care we did. A good citizen and union member has a responsibility to vote — but not just to vote blindly. Your responsibility is to cast an informed vote.

Retired L-104 BM-ST

Mike was a trustee for the Boilermakers National Pension Trust, a chairperson of the Boilermakers Apprenticeship and Training Trust, the head union trustee for the Northwest Metal Crafts Health Trust Fund, and a delegate and officer for the Puget Sound Metal Trades Council. Mike dedicated his life to creating a better standard of living and working conditions for those he represented and his efforts are greatly appreciated. He was a kind-hearted, giving person who touched the lives of many. His presence is greatly missed.

Retired L-104 BM-ST Seattle, Wash.

Get something to say?

SND A LETTER TO THE EDITOR:
The Boilermaker Reporter

753 State Ave. Suite 570
Kansas City KS 66101
FAX: (913) 281-8104
E-mail: danbuel@boilermakers.org

Letters to the Editor

Retiree thanks Council for endorsing Obama

I WANT TO thank the Boilermaker Executive Council for announcing their endorsement of Barack Obama for president. I hope he makes good on his promise to lower our greenhouse gas emissions without destroying jobs by supporting a cap-and-trade program, similar to the system successfully used to lower sulfur dioxide emissions. Senator Obama also understands the need to turn our nation in a different direction, focusing on global warming and will create incentives to increase fuel economy and reduce our dependence on imported oil.

Obama’s proposal for health care reform would give every American access to a plan similar to what members of Congress enjoy — and at an affordable cost. All Americans would be covered, regardless of employment status, and everyone would have access to high-quality care. He will lower medical costs by modernizing the U.S. health care system reducing administrative overhead, and increasing access to preventive healthcare.

Most of all, we are encouraged by the effect Senator Obama’s campaign is having on the voters. He is igniting voters — many of them young voters, new to the electoral process — with his passion for change that is sorely needed after seven years of Bush’s misguided policies. Voters are going to the polls in record numbers. Election officials project the turnout for the primaries will be the highest in 40 years. Many are buying more voting equipment, because they anticipate a record turnout in November.

Voter enthusiasm for the electoral process is a welcome change. A democracy only works when the citizens get involved, and Obama is involving citizens like no one has in decades. I urge every Boilermaker to get involved, as well. Get registered to vote. We have the opportunity to bring about real change in this election. But to do so, we must get involved in the process.

Make your vote an informed vote

Political action can change nation’s course

IN FEBRUARY the Executive Council voted unanimously to endorse Senator Barack Obama for president of the United States. Our endorsement was not an easy decision. Many good candi- dates entered the race, and we studied them all and in the end determined that Obama is our best hope to unite our nation, jump-start our economy, and return the United States to its rightful place as not only the most powerful nation, but also the most respected nation.

One of my old friends, John Edwards, we know that Obama will be a strong advocate for working families. His lifelong reputation for standing up for workers is built on the community organizing he did to help rebuild a neighborhood ravaged by the closing of a steel mill as much as it is by his work in the Illinois state legislature and as a U.S. senator. Hillary Clinton will support working families, too, but she will not be as good for Boilermakers as Obama. And although we respect John McCain for his service to our country, his voting record on issues that affect workers is terrible.

Throughout his campaign, Senator Obama has proposed workable solu- tions for many of the nation’s most pronounced problems. He wants to relieve the economic pressure middle class families are feeling by giving them tax cuts. He wants to create jobs here at home by providing tax incen- tives for businesses. And he wants to end incentives for employers to ship jobs overseas. He will invest in U.S. manufacturing and create training pro- grams that will help workers get back out of work by the Bush recession as well as young people just entering the workforce.

Our construction and cement-mak- ing Boilermakers will like his energy policies, which we believe serve the interest of Boilermakers better than do the policies of any other candidate. He promises to lower greenhouse gas emissions without destroying jobs by constructing a cap-and-trade program, similar to the system successfully used to lower sulfur dioxide emissions. Senator Obama also understands the need to turn our nation in a different direction, focusing on global warming and will create incentives to increase fuel economy and reduce our dependence on imported oil.

Obama’s proposal for health care reform would give every American access to a plan similar to what members of Congress enjoy — and at an affordable cost. All Americans would be covered, regardless of employment status, and everyone would have access to high-quality care. He will lower medical costs by modernizing the U.S. health care system reducing administrative overhead, and increasing access to preventive healthcare.

Most of all, we are encouraged by the effect Senator Obama’s campaign is having on the voters. He is igniting voters — many of them young voters, new to the electoral process — with his passion for change that is sorely needed after seven years of Bush’s misguided policies. Voters are going to the polls in record numbers. Election officials project the turnout for the primaries will be the highest in 40 years. Many are buying more voting equipment, because they anticipate a record turnout in November.

Voter enthusiasm for the electoral process is a welcome change. A democracy only works when the citizens get involved, and Obama is involving citizens like no one has in decades. I urge every Boilermaker to get involved, as well. Get registered to vote. We have the opportunity to bring about real change in this election. But to do so, we must get involved in the process.

Make your vote an informed vote

WE IN THE EXECUTIVE Council recognize that not every Boilermaker member will agree with our endorse- ment. People are vastly different, and good people may disagree. We came to our decision after studying all of the candidates — not only the positions they will advocate, but the attitudes toward working people and unions they have demonstrated, and continue to demonstrate, through their actions and their accessibility.

I ask that all of you take the same care we did. A good citizen and union member has a responsibility to vote — but not just to vote blindly. Your responsibility is to cast an informed vote.

Senator Obama came into the national spotlight more recently than his Democratic rival, Hillary Clinton, or the Republican candidate, John McCain. He is a new face, and many people know little about him. I knew little about him until he announced his candidacy. But the more I learned, the more I liked his positions as well as his attitude about our union and our members. I encourage you to learn all you can about him, too. Visit his camp-aign Web site — www.BarackObama. com — and read about him in future issues of the Boilermaker Reporter as well as on the Boilermaker Web site — www.boilermakers.org. Learn about the other candidates, too. You cannot make a fair comparison unless you learn about them in their speeches, but also the personal profiles on our Web site not only about presidential candidates but also about the candidates for the House of Representatives, Senate, and governor.

I pledge that every Boilermaker who votes this election will vote for Barack Obama, grower of the health care plan, creator of the job plan, winner of the environment plan. I pledge that every Boilermaker who votes this election will vote for Barack Obama, grower of the health care plan, creator of the job plan, winner of the environment plan.

Retiree thanks Council for endorsing Obama

I WANT TO thank the Boilermaker Executive Council for announcing their endorsement of Barack Obama for president. I hope he makes good on his promise to lower our greenhouse gas emissions without destroying jobs by supporting a cap-and-trade program, similar to the system successfully used to lower sulfur dioxide emissions. Senator Obama also understands the need to turn our nation in a different direction, focusing on global warming and will create incentives to increase fuel economy and reduce our dependence on imported oil.

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