

insight

February, 2006 Volume 9, Issue 2

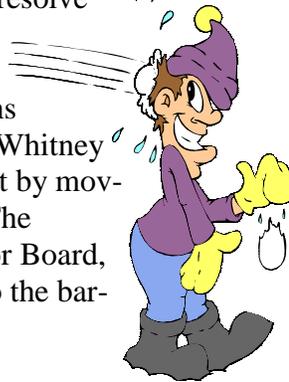
357 Main St.— East Hartford, CT. 06118 — Telephone: 568-3000



“Pratt” is Back At It Again

A few years back Pratt & Whitney tried to take work from the bargaining unit members who perform Quality Review (QR) functions. The company changed the procedures that employees follow and authorized salary employees to perform the function.

When we were unable to resolve the issue in the grievance procedure the union filed a charge with the National Labor Relations Board. We charged that Pratt & Whitney was depleting the bargaining unit by moving the QR functions to salary. The charge was resolved by the Labor Board, and the work was moved back to the bargaining unit.



Pratt & Whitney has done it again. Recently procedures were issued in the Turbine Module Center and in the Compression System Module Center *again taking bargaining unit QR functions and allowing salary to perform the functions.* There are open grievances on this latest violation, and charges have been filed at the National Labor Relations Board...**AGAIN.** These latest violations show Pratt & Whitney’s non-compliance with past resolutions. All employees should



review procedures to make sure that the company is not trying to erode hourly job functions and give those functions to salary. If you find something that doesn’t look right, call for a steward and **grieve it.**



New Haven Winchester Plant Closing

On January 17, 2006 Winchester / US Repeating Arms announced they will close the New Haven manufacturing plant effective March 31, 2006. The plant has produced Winchester rifles for 140 years in New Haven. The plant is represented by Machinist Union Local 609 and the closing would eliminate 186 jobs. **Wal-Mart is a contributing factor to the closing.** Wal-Mart is a large customer of Winchester rifles and is pushing the company to reduce the cost of the product *by sending production work overseas.* This is what Wal-Mart has done to manufacturers throughout America, driving costs down and escalating the *race to the bottom* for American workers.

Machinist Union leadership is working to find buyers for the plant that will continue to manufacture the Winchester rifles in New Haven. There have been some prospects but work needs to continue. When you pull into a Wal-Mart and think about the values you are receiving think about the costs to the American workforce as well. Is it worth it to allow companies like Wal-Mart to put American workers out of jobs so we can purchase cheap shoes, DVD players...or cheaply made foreign rifles???

Local Lodge 1746 will stand by its brothers and sisters at Winchester / US Repeating Arms and assist them in any way we can. We may soon be asking for **your assistance** by writing/calling politicians, or participating in a rally to save these jobs. **Stay tuned.**



The Wolves Outside the Door

Last month, America endured another gut-wrenching episode of workplace safety breakdown when thirteen coal miners in West Virginia lost their lives following a methane gas explosion in the Sago mine, owned by International Coal Group (ICG). Days later, tragedy struck the state again when two miners were killed as a result of a conveyor belt fire in the Aracoma Alma Mine, owned by the Massey Energy Company. As of February 1st, the lives lost in these tragic mine accidents prompted West Virginia Governor Joseph Manchin to order a “safety shutdown” for all the hundreds of mines in the state.



Finally, some good news came from the Canadian mining industry, when seventy-six workers in a Saskatchewan potash mine were rescued after a fire had trapped them underground for thirty hours. What comparisons, if any, can be drawn between these mining accidents? To begin with, the miners who lost their lives in the Sago and Alma mines worked for non-union companies—ICG and Massey. The owner of the Canadian potash mine—Mosaic—employs a global workforce of 8,000 employees that was **92% unionized in its North American operations**. The trapped Canadians were members of CEP, the Communications, Energy, and Paper-workers’ Union of Canada. CEP Vice-President Dave Coles stressed that their survival was in no small part due to increased health and safety training and measures. According to Coles, *“It appears that all safety procedures were followed, and that the training that our members received at the mine was critical in their survival of this potentially devastating fire.”* Much credit was given to workers and rescue teams of the organized workforce for a “textbook” response to the emergency at hand.

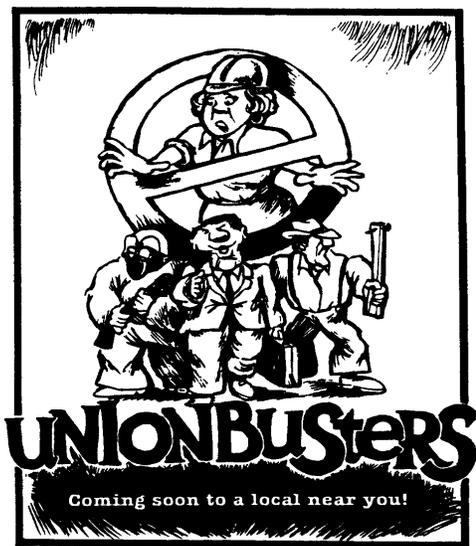
In their 2005 annual report, Mosaic boasts of one million consecutive work-hours without a lost-time injury in twelve worldwide facilities. In contrast, Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) statistics show that the Sago mine had an overall injury rate of 55.8 in the second quarter of 2005, *meaning nearly 56 out of 100 workers reported some type of work-related injury during that period*. MSHA visited the Sago mine 93 times last year, *citing parent company ICG 208 times* and shutting down parts of the mine on 18 occasions during the year. MSHA cited 13 serious violations in recent months, including shortfalls in ventilation systems, marked escape routes, and adequate protection from roof collapses. While none of these serious violations fingered methane gas accumulation as a problem, they do in fact establish a pattern that defines a lack of safety culture at the Sago mine.

Both of the American mining companies made a significant effort to keep the United Mine Workers’ union out of the investigation process. ICG sponsored a petition to keep the union out, and tried to identify their employees who requested union participation. The CEO of Massey Energy Company sued Mine Workers’ president Cecil Roberts and the Charleston Gazette for “defamatory remarks” made after the fire in his mine (later dismissed by a Virginia court).

Generally speaking, most people think of issues like wages, pension, and job security when they think of the union’s role in the workplace. Health and safety often comes as an afterthought. The Sago and Alma mining tragedies punctuate just how essential unions can be, or as CEP President James Clancy said, *“The disaster in West Virginia shows that workers pay for lax health and safety protections with their lives.”*

The Eagles’ Don Henley once sang, *“The wolf is always at the door,”* and while he probably wasn’t referring to workplace safety, it’s a fitting analogy. Without question, there are some managers who are sincerely dedicated to the promotion of a safe workplace. But when workers lack union representation, the door is left open for the wolves to come in, those who claim to be advocates for safety, *but whose true allegiance lies with production and profit*. Unfortunately, when no union exists to identify these wolves and drive them away, it sometimes takes a slaughter to expose them for what they really are.





ATTENTION UNION BROTHERS & SISTERS:

**TEAMSTERS LOCAL 443
NEEDS OUR SUPPORT DUE TO THE STOP
AND SHOP'S
SELLING OF THE
DISTRUBUTION CENTER
IN NORTH HAVEN CT.
THIS IS A CLEAR CASE OF
UNION BUSTING:
850 TEAMSTERS WILL LOSE THEIR JOBS**

PROTEST Stop & Shop AND ALL OF THEIR AFFILATES

**CALL OR WRITE YOUR LOCAL STOP AND SHOP AND TELL
THEM YOU DO NOT APPROVE OF THIS.**

If you shop at S & S, speak to the manager & complain!

GO TO: WWW.STOPANDSHOP.COM TO FIND A STORE NEAR YOU.



Community Renewal Team: Daycare Workers on Strike Since November

Child Care workers at pre-school programs in the Hartford Area have been working without a contract since December of 2003. These workers, most of them Black and Hispanic women, joined Local 376 of the United Auto Workers (UAW) and have been out on strike since November 1 of 2005. They work less than 35 hours a week, making between \$8 and \$12 an hour. They are required to have 2 or 4 year College Degrees in the field of Early Childhood Education, and work hard to provide their children with quality daycare and developmental opportunities.

These women work for one of the premier “anti-poverty” agencies in the Hartford Area, CRT, the Community Renewal Team. CRT receives tons of our tax money from Federal, State and Local funding sources, as well as tax-deductible private donations. CRT is a “non-profit” entity, which runs many social service program to “help the poor”. It is a SHAME that CRT has forced these dedicated workers out on strike right before Christmas and during the Winter Season.

CRT has plenty of funding—and they use their daycare program as a model to raise money for the whole organization...But when it comes to negotiating a good contract and fair raises for the daycare workers, CRT really means “Can’t Really Try”.

Members of Local 1746 donated \$200 to the UAW-CRT strike fund at January’s Meeting. Also, we have visited the picket line on Windsor St. in Hartford, and brought hot soup to the strikers. Representatives from the CRT strike will address our Monthly Meeting on Feb. 12, 2006.



Caring Enough To Save a Life



For many years labor unions were a lonely voice speaking out for workers struggling with addictive diseases. We have long known that organized labor cannot let brothers and sisters in the union movement suffer and die because of drugs and/or alcohol.

Still, from time to time, even organized labor has gotten lost by denying the problem, wishing it would just go away, or giving up on the person who gets involved with drink or drugs. We forget that it is *not normal* to show up for work intoxicated. It is not a happy thing to earn a good wage, *and*

then waste every cent on drugs or alcohol. It can't be success to live every moment of our day obsessed by our agony over *a son or daughter hooked on dope or booze.*

Increasingly, unions have put in place member assistance programs, establishing peer counseling efforts and sponsoring drug abuse educational activities for members and their families. This type of organized response is important. More important is realizing that the addict or alcoholic is genuinely ill with a sickness that can kill; a condition which, of itself, will only get worse. Yet the good news is that it is an illness **which can successfully be treated.**

All of us worry if we see the signs of cancer, heart disease, or mental illness in a fellow worker; we act when we see those signs. Yet, when addiction or alcoholism are involved, the tendency is to ignore the problem. This is true from both co-workers, and most especially supervision and management.

Co-workers can approach the individual in a caring manner, and offer assistance. Management, most especially direct supervisors, have a company mandate to approach individuals with such problems, and to offer assistance. What a pity that this is seldom done.

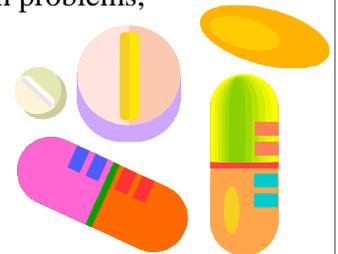
Statistics show that across the country, managers choose to ignore the problem.

Here at the various UTC locations, we have both a company and union EAP Program; yet referrals from supervision are not a common situation. There

are all types of resources available to those in need. No member of organized labor should lose their job, home, family, or life because of

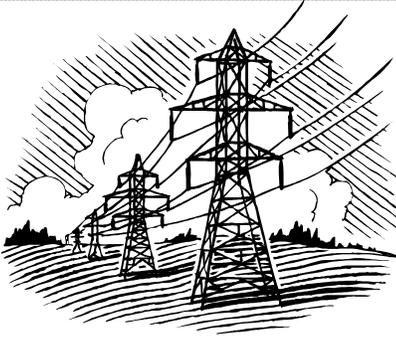
chemical or alcohol use. It just takes a moment to offer help. With respect

and love, every union, every local, every member, or supervisor, can care enough to make a difference. To encourage a fellow worker to begin recovery is not to accuse, or condemn, that individual, but to care.



Care enough to save a life.





Runaway Energy Costs

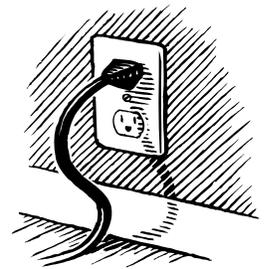
In recent months it has become quite apparent that energy costs have increased substantially, while our income hasn't kept up. With gasoline, home heating oil, natural gas and electricity prices climbing, it is time to examine our habits and see where we all can improve. With gasoline, everyone can do their best to maintain vehicles and limit trips. The federal government for 2004-2005 had a tax credit of \$2000 for the purchase of new hybrid vehicles. In 2006 it will be reduced to \$500, and after 2006 the credit will be eliminated altogether.

Our homes consume the majority of our energy costs. Many utility companies offer rebates and incentives for energy efficient appliances and lighting fixtures (<http://www.ctsavesenergy.org>). According to the Department of Energy only 20 percent of homes built before 1980 are well insulated. So what can we do to become more energy efficient?

Installing weather-stripping, energy efficient doors, programmable thermostats, energy efficient windows, heating duct repairs, heating system repairs or replacement, water heaters, heating system filter replacement, electrical outlet or switch gaskets and energy efficient water devices are just a few of the many ways to save energy. Many of these items can be purchased **free of CT State Sales Tax** until April 1st of 2006. (www.ct.gov/drs... look for **Sales Tax Holiday** link on this homepage).

There are many websites where one can find tips and resources to help. One site is called the Home Energy Saver (<http://hes.lbl.gov>). This site is sponsored by the Department of Energy. There is a handy energy advisor, which calculates energy use and savings opportunities, based on a detailed description of the home provided by the user. Users can begin the process by simply entering their zip code, and in turn receive instant initial estimates. For incentives available to recoup some of the costs of making one's home more energy efficient, check (http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=products.pr_tax_credits). This site has a listing for existing homes and new homes under construction. Tax incentives are broken down for many improvements such as insulation, windows and heating systems.

In closing there are many programs for increasing energy efficiency in our homes. Some communities have low interest loans available to improve prop-



"We found a country where CEO's work for \$5 a day."





Next Monthly Meeting
Sunday, February 12th at 11:00 am
We would Love to see you there!



Local Lodge Officers' Election

On February 15, 2006 there will be elections for the offices of **president, vice-president, conductor/sentinel and three trustees**, to fill the unexpired term of office ending January 13, 2008.

The election will be at the *Machinists Union Hall, 357 Main Street, East Hartford, CT.*

Polls will be open at 6:00 a.m. and will close at 8:00 p.m.



"In Memoriam"

Coretta Scott King:
1927-2006

"A war with Iraq will increase anti-American sentiment, create more terrorists, and drain as much as 200 Billion taxpayer dollars, which should be invested in human development here in America"
Coretta Scott King, 2003

Please email your announcements & messages. Items for the next issue must be mailed by March 1st 2006.

localodge1746@snet.net



WE THE PEOPLE... of the East Hartford Surface Treat Area would like to honor our co-worker Manuel (Manny) Rosa, who retired from Pratt on January 30, 2006. Brother Rosa was 65 years old, and had over 16 years with the company. Shame on the Surface Treat managers and cell leaders who did not even get him a cake. Nor did they see fit to come around to wish Manny well at the party that **we his fellow workers** planned for him....**Good Luck Manny!!**

**"THE PEOPLE" of
Pratt & Whitney Surface Treatment,
East Hartford**

Arthur Lamson III

December 6, 2005

Brother Lamson was a member of our Local since 1979. He served in our local as a Shop Committee Man and Shop Steward, as a member of the Organizing and Legislative Committees, and as our Local Lodge Delegate to numerous Machinist and labor gatherings. If there was a rally in town for workers' rights, Art would be there--with his famous **"corporate pig nose"** and **thunderous voice** to urge them on. He will be missed by his family, and all those he knew, worked and rallied with.



WEBSITES:

- www.iamLL1746.org
- www.iamdistrict26.org
- www.goiam.org
- www.shopunionmade.org

Dinners are Served :

Every Friday Night at the Machinists Club.

Take out orders are available, portions are big, and the price is right.

To Order Call 860-568-4234

Orders taken on Thursday or Friday from 4-8pm.

Weekly Menus are posted in the shop and at the Union Hall.



LOCAL EXECUTIVE BOARD: Mike Stone, President; James Bullock, Vice-President; Bill Coney, Recording Secretary; Nancy Flagg, Secretary Treasurer;

David Batchelder, Conductor/Sentinel; Howard Huestis, Ron Ouellette, John Tronier; Trustees

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Dave Batchelder-*Editor*, Linnea Demanche-*Co-Editor, layout and design.*

Joe Durette, Gerry Martin, George Rogers, Earl Schofield, Mike Stone