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President/Business Manager's Report

Performance Review for the President of the United States of America

By Ronald Kastner



We're all familiar with those annual job performance reviews. Our boss sits down with us and goes over the specific parts of

our jobs where we are expected to work at a competent level.

It's time to look at George W. Bush's job performance. He's had four years to meet the minimum expectations of his job performance. How did George really do?

First, in the area of the Economy,

1.6 million private sector jobs have been lost, 1.1 million government jobs have been created leaving a conservative net loss of 585,000 American jobs since there were in 2001 when George Bush took office. There are tax incentives for corporations to move jobs overseas because Bush said, "It's good for the American economy to ship jobs overseas if the work can be done cheaper there." 2.8 million manufacturing jobs have been lost, and the replacement jobs are lower paying service sector jobs.

Still in the area of Jobs, Bush changed the rules reducing the number of workers who qualify for overtime pay, giving then comp or flex time when it is convenient for the corporation. He did this despite "serious coaching" from citizens across America who sent thousands of letters to Congress and the White House opposing those reductions. When Congress stopped his legislative attempt, Bush attempted to change the Department of Labor rules. When that was blocked he forced the

changes through Congress by adding it to a major appropriations bill, and threatening to veto the funding bill.

The Budget Deficit - Bush inherited a \$256 billion surplus. Now there is a \$374.2 billion deficit – a fiscal loss of \$630.2 billion dollars in three years. In 2011, the first of the baby-boomers will have reached retirement age, coinciding with an explosion of the deficit and massive debt interest payments. By running large deficits in the years before the baby boomers retire, the country is squandering the opportunity to prepare for this major demographic change.

Economy, Jobs Performance and the Budget: President Bush Fails to meet expectations – 0 points on the appraisal.

In the area of Healthcare more Americans have lost their healthcare benefits after losing the jobs that provided those benefits. If they found a new job-it has lower pay and either worse health insurance or no benefits at all. Today almost 44 million Americans are uninsured. Since Bush took office, at least 4.9 million more people, including 126,000 more children, have become uninsured. Yet President Bush has put forward no plan and taken no effective steps to remedy this crisis.

On Medicare - contrary to federal rules, the Bush administration has been allowing some private health plans to actually limit Medicare patients' health care choices. The Bush administration exceeded its authority when it allowed preferred provider organizations (PPOs) to restrict beneficiaries' choices of doctors, nursing homes and home health care agencies. Yet, Medicare is spending some

\$750 a year more for each beneficiary in a PPO than it would have spent if the patient had stayed in the traditional Medicare program.

Bush's plan raises Prescription Drug costs. Just three months after Bush's Medicare "reform" passed and nearly two years before seniors see the benefits, the verdict on it is in: it's no good for seniors, especially those with lower incomes. Seniors will not see cheaper prescription prices when the plan is implemented in 2006, because it does nothing to control the rising cost of drugs. The plan will raise drug costs and reduce benefits all while enriching the pharmaceutical companies and providing a windfall for HMOs and the health insurance industry.

The Bush plan also makes it illegal for the government to negotiate drug prices with the pharmaceutical industry, which

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FRONTLINE

IBEW LOCAL 21

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Local 21, AFL-CIO/CLC

IBEW Local 21

1307 W. Butterfield Road
Suite 422
Downers Grove,
Illinois 60515-5606
Phone 630 960-4466
Fax 630 960-9607



Website

www.ibew21.org

Newsire hotlines

630 415-2711
866 423-9582

OFFICERS

Ronald E. Kastner,
President-Business Manager
/ Financial Secretary

Rick Gessler,
Vice-President
/ Assistant Business Manager

Jacque Fields,
Treasurer

Linda Corcoran-Cox,
Recording Secretary

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Kevin Curran	Alison Watson
Bill Lawrence	Rosetta Shinn
Jim Noble	Bryan Smith
Larry Schuler	

MANAGING EDITOR

Tom Hopper email:
thopper@igc.org
Phone 630 960-4466 X223
Fax 630 960-9607

EDITORS

Larry Moeller email:
ljm336@ameritech.net
Nancy North email:
nancy.north@comcast.net

Comments and articles are welcome and should be sent to the editors. Local 21 reserves the right to edit letters and articles, and to use items as space allows.

Member: Illinois State Labor Press Association, Midwest Labor Press Association, and International Labor Communications Association, AFL-CIO/CLC

SBC: Poor Losers

By Rick Gessler, Vice President / Assistant Business Manager



Here's an update on the status of the arbitration decision on the dispute with SBC in which the company contracted out and continues to

contract out our work after the layoff of Local 21 members. In addition to getting the company to abide by the terms of the agreement, our goal is to get our laid off members back on the payroll. **SBC's** stall tactics are **blatantly wrong** and will not be tolerated by our union.

SBC's strategy is clearly to delay resolution of this dispute by not complying with the Arbitrator's award, beyond the date that our laid off brothers and sisters maintain recall rights. Briefly, our contract includes a grievance and arbitration procedure to resolve workplace disputes with SBC. The last step is arbitration, where the company and the union mutually select a neutral third party to hear the positions and arguments from both sides, along with testimony and other rational on the dispute. Once the arbitrator renders a decision in the case, it is final and binding on both sides:

"The award of the arbitrator shall be final and binding upon the parties, subject to law, and the Company and the Union agree to abide by the decision of the arbitrator."

You win some and you lose some, but again, the decision is final.

United States Federal policy favors industrial peace, preferring contract agreements which include both arbitration and no-strike clauses. It's important that all members understand that our contract includes a no-strike clause. In other words, the union gives up the right to strike to settle disputes in exchange for a grievance and arbitration process.

Agreements to arbitrate should be specifically enforced as a matter of federal law, which specifically advances the policy of peaceful resolution of labor disputes. This brief explanation of arbitration labor law clarifies SBC's latest cowardly move in what

should legally be, an already settled dispute.

In late September **SBC filed a federal lawsuit in U.S. District Court, demanding to have the arbitrator's award vacated and thrown out.** Named as the defendant in the suit is Local 21, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Additionally, SBC has asked the Court to award SBC its costs, reasonable attorney fees and all other relief the court deems just.

If every time SBC loses a major case in arbitration, it refuses to abide by the arbitrator's decision or takes the Union to court, one might ask why continue to abide by the no-strike clause in the contract. There are many answers to this question, but one that stands out is **Integrity**. Both sides signed and agreed to the terms of the contract. One side continues to violate it, and one side continues to represent the rights of the workers covered by it. One side represents runaway corporate power and greed and one side fights every day for a better life for all working families. This fight is about the lives of our laid off brothers and sisters and their families. Many still have not found work and SBC continues using outside contractors. We must never forget that an injury to one is an injury to all.

Our union is not taking SBC's lawsuit or their continued delays lightly. **We have counter sued SBC** asking the judge to issue an order for the company to comply with the Arbitrator's award.

SBC is attempting to manipulate the law, the courts, the integrity of the arbitration procedure and even the collective bargaining agreement, but most important, SBC is injuring our brothers and sisters waiting for recall. In suits to enforce arbitration awards, the law says that the courts should not accept even serious error of fact or contract interpretation as grounds for vacating an award. As long as the arbitrator is even arguably acting within the scope of the contractual authority, the award should be enforced.

We ask that each and every member continue to raise this issue daily with each and every SBC manager, and let's ride them each and every day until they are sick and tired of hearing about it and until we have justice in this dispute. **Because when there is no justice - there must be no peace.**

Attendance Case Victory

By Kevin Curran, Business Representative



We had a major issue in the Oak Park National Credit Verification Center concerning an employee who was **suspended pending**

dismissal for attendance. As most of you know, as soon as the Union is notified of a suspension pending dismissal, we immediately make a documented demand of the company requiring them to turn over all relevant documents on the case to the Union. After reviewing the records in this case, it was clear to us that there was no way this member should be discharged. In an effort to resolve the issue, we contacted SBC and attempted to get the employee back to work right away instead of waiting

until the Dismissal Panel took place. The company said that they had no interest in settling the case with us. We told them, "OK, but it's going to cost you." Management kind of laughed that off.

So the hearing date arrived and Area Steward Elly Augustine and I met with the company. Elly and I knew that the Senior Manager from Oak Park at the hearing had direct knowledge of other employees in the office who had **worse** attendance records than the grievant, but yet they had not been disciplined as severely. So, in the hearing, on the record, we asked this manager, "Isn't it a **fact** that you know that there are other employees in the Oak Park NCVC who have a worse attendance record than the grievant?" As we expected, in typical company fashion, he responded by saying he didn't know, he'd have to check his files, etc., etc. Well, we told him not to bother checking his files. We then presented him with a letter demanding that he turn

over a copy of all of his attendance files immediately to the Union. The letter also demanded the attendance records of all employees in each and every Credit and Collections Center be turned over to the Union as well to ensure that the grievant had not been treated with disparity in comparison to any employee in Credit and Collections.

As you can imagine, shortly after making this demand, the case was resolved. The grievant was reinstated **without a Back to Work Agreement**. In addition, the grievant was paid approximately **\$3,200 in back wages**. As most of you are aware, the company continues to be more aggressive when it comes to discipline, particularly in the area of attendance. It is imperative that we, as the Union, become even more aggressive in opposing any and all attempts by SBC to implement unjust discipline. **Solidarity!**

Kastner, continued from page 1

results in a windfall of \$139 billion for drug companies. HMOs and health insurers will receive \$46 billion in incentives just for agreeing to participate in the plan. And employers can reduce benefits or increase retirees' premiums without losing \$89 billion in tax breaks and subsidies. In addition, the Bush Administration has admitted that the \$400 billion cost of the bill is 35 percent too low. Administration sources admitted that "it was an open secret" that the bill would be more expensive even though President Bush stated publicly he would not sign anything that exceeded \$400 billion.

Healthcare and Prescription Drug Costs: President Bush Fails to meet expectations-0 points on the appraisal.

In the area of Standing Up for Working Families, the Bush record is not just miserable, it is absolutely shocking. To share the details of the most dismal record of any U.S. President in our lifetime, would require every page of *Frontline*. The Bush administration's Department of Labor attempted to portray itself as an advocate and defender of workers and unions. In the

past three years, the Bush administration in the past three years has gutted the collective bargaining rights of tens of thousands of federal workers, overturned and weakened workplace safety rules, sought to eliminate Fair Labor Standards Act overtime pay protections for up to 8 million workers, attacked prevailing wage laws by banning project labor agreements, opposed raising the federal minimum wage, supported efforts to silence workers' political voice, appointed an anti-worker/anti-union National Labor Relations Board that weakens organized labor and everything we believe in and have fought for in the last 120 years. This is just a sampling. The list goes on and on and on. Can you even imagine what Bush will do to working families if he has the chance for four more years?

Standing Up for Working Families: President Bush Fails to meet expectations-0 points on the appraisal.

Last - let's talk about **the Integrity of George W. Bush**. There's Bush on Iraq - Bush on the Economy - Bush on his own Policies - and Bush on Bush. For the top

Bush lies, there are literally hundreds of reliable sources, probably because there are so many of them (lies). Just type in "Bush lies" into any Internet search engine for tons of information or check out one website that I like at: www.democrats.org/specialreports/top10_lies/ It is critical that we educate ourselves about this man, his beliefs and his policies.

Integrity and the Code of Conduct: President Bush Fails-Numerous Violations = Unacceptable Performance!

More than ever, we all must be educated about who we elect, whether here in our home states or on the national level. When leaders fail to meet the expectations of the working class and the American people, we must exercise one of our most important rights - the right to vote. You will find a list of endorsements on pages 4 & 5 of *Frontline*. Please, make sure that you exercise your right to vote on November 2nd. It is time for change at the top of our great country. **It is time to fire George W. Bush** and also, time to elect John Kerry for President of the United States.

2004 Illinois State AFL/CIO Endorsements

based on pro-labor voting record

ILLINOIS HOUSE by District

1st	Susana Mendoza (D)	30th	William Davis (D)	75th	Careen Gordon (D)
2nd	Edward Acevedo (D)	31st	Mary Flowers (D)	76th	Frank Mautino (D)
3rd	Willie Delgado (D)	33rd	Marlow Colvin (D)	77th	Angelo Saviano (R)
4th	Cynthia Soto (D)	34th	Connie Howard (D)	78th	Deborah Graham (D)
5th	Ken Dunkin (D)	35th	Kevin Joyce (D)	79th	Lisa Dugan (D)
6th	Patricia Bailey (D)	36th	Jim Brosnahan (D)	80th	George Skully (D)
7th	Karen Yarbrough (D)	37th	Kevin McCarthy (D)	82nd	Kim Savage (D)
8th	Calvin Giles (D)	38th	Robin Kelly (D)	83rd	Linda Chapa LaVia (D)
9th	Art Turner (D)	39th	Maria Antonia Berrios(D)	86th	Jack McGuire (D)
10th	Annazette Collins (D)	40th	Rich Bradley (D)	87th	Bill Mitchell (R)
11th	John Fritchey (D)	43rd	Michael Noland (D)	91st	Mike Smith (D)
12th	Sara Feigenholtz (D)	46th	Joe Vosicky (D)	92nd	Ricca Slone (D)
13th	Larry McKeon (D)	47th	James Cavallo (D)	95th	Dirk Enger (D)
14th	Harry Osterman (D)	51st	Nancy Shepherdson (D)	98th	Gary Hannig (D)
15th	John D'Amico (D)	52nd	Larry Feigen (D)	101st	Bob Flider (D)
16th	Lou Lang (D)	57th	Elaine Nekritz (D)	103rd	Naomi Jakobsson (D)
17th	Michelle Bromberg (D)	58th	Karen May (D)	106th	Scott Crawford (D)
18th	Julie Hamos (D)	59th	Kathleen Ryg (D)	107th	Kurt Granberg (D)
19th	Joe Lyons (D)	60th	Eddie Washington (D)	108th	Bill Grunloh (D)
20th	Michael McAuliffe (R)	62nd	Sharyn Elman (D)	111th	Steve Davis (D)
21st	Robert Molaro (D)	63rd	Jack Franks (D)	112th	Jay Hoffman (D)
22nd	Michael Madigan (D)	64th	Paula Yensen (D)	113th	Thomas Holbrook (D)
23rd	Dan Burke (D)	67th	Chuck Jefferson (D)	114th	Wyvetter Younge (D)
25th	Barbara Flynn Currie (D)	68th	Carroll Brumfield (D)	115th	Mic Middleton (D)
26th	Lovana Jones (D)	70th	Bob Brown (D)	116th	Dan Reitz (D)
27th	Monique Davis (D)	71st	Mike Boland (D)	117th	John Bradley (D)
28th	Roberta Rita (D)	72nd	Pat Verschoore (D)	118th	Brandon Phelps (D)
29th	David Miller (D)	74th	Don Moffitt (R)		

ILLINOIS SENATE by District

2nd	Miguel del Valle (D)	14th	Emil Jones, Jr. (D)	38th	Pat Welch (D)
3rd	Mattie Hunter (D)	17th	Donnie Trotter (D)	47th	John Sullivan (D)
5th	Rickey Hendon (D)	20th	Iris Martinez (D)	49th	Deanna Demuzio (D)
8th	Ira Silverstein (D)	29th	Susan Garrett (D)	56th	Bill Haine (D)
11th	Lou Viverito (D)	32nd	Patrick Ouimet (D)	59th	Gary Forby (D)

ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT by District

		5th	District Gordon Maag (D)		
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ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT by District

3rd	District Mary K. O'Brian (D)	5th	District James K. Donovan (D)	3rd	District Bill Holdridge (R) - retention
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COOK COUNTY

Commissioners of Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Gloria Majewski (D) Patricia Young (D) Barbara MCGowan (D)	Circuit Court Clerk Dorothy Brown (D) Recorder of Deeds Eugene Moore (D)	State's Attorney Dick Devine (D) Board of Review Larry Rogers (D)
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You can bring these endorsements to the voting booth with you.

Indiana State AFL/CIO 2004 Endorsements

STATE - W I D E

Governor Joe Kernan (D)
Lt. Governor Kathy Davis (D)
Attorney General Joseph Hogstett (D)

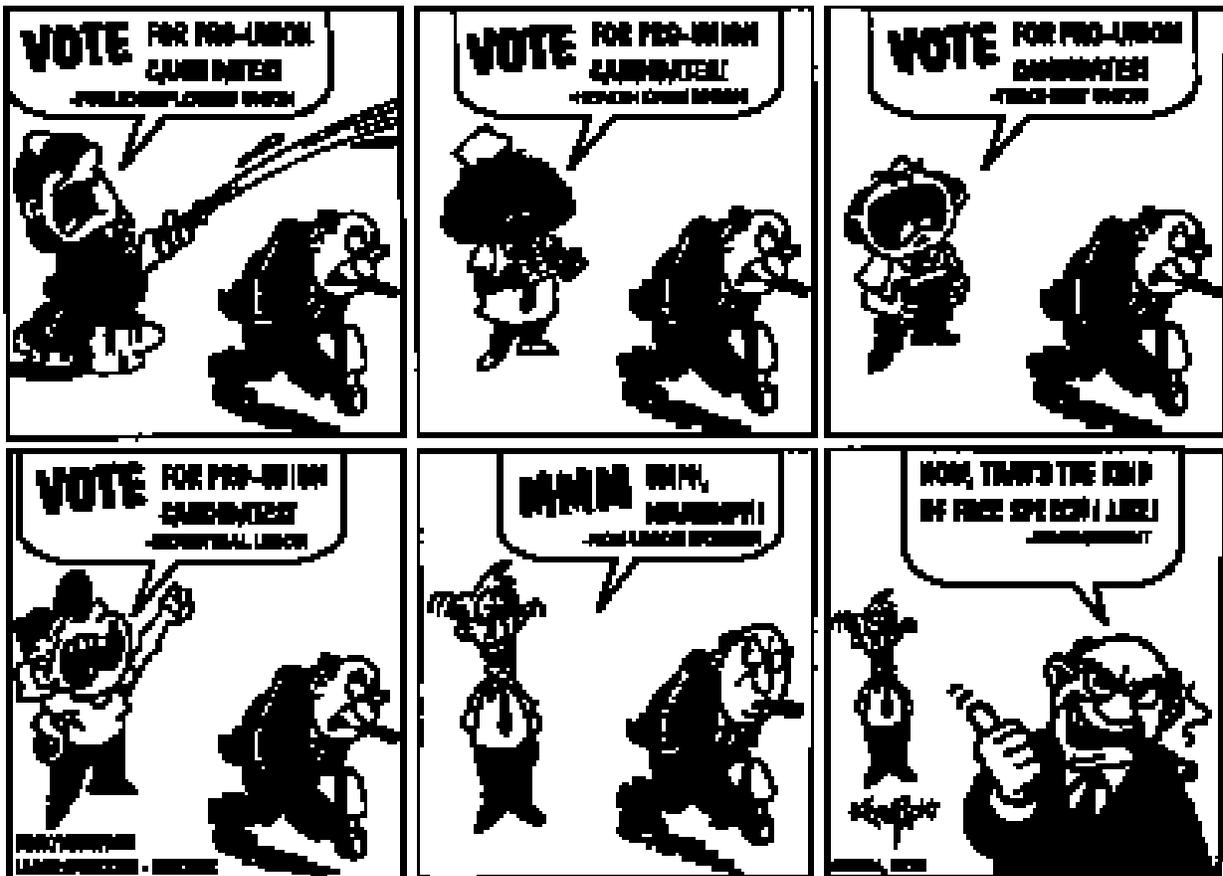
STATE SENATE by District

2nd	Samuel Smith (D)
3rd	Earline Rogers (D)
5th	Nancy Dembowski (D)

STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES by District

1st	Linda Lawson (D)	11th	Dan Stevenson (D)
2nd	Earl Harris (D)	12th	John Aguilera (D)
3rd	Charlie Brown (D)	13th	Chester Dobis (D)
4th	Ralph Ayres (R)	14th	Vernon Smith (D)
10th	Duane Cheney (D)	19th	Robert Kuzman (D)

You can bring these endorsements to the voting booth with you.



It's Time to Join the Game

By Dennis McCafferty, Committee on Political Education



If you're like a great many of us working Americans you're getting pretty disgusted with politics by now. It ticks you off to see politicians

playing footsie with corporate lobbyists, receiving fat contributions in return for doling out huge tax cuts, favorable regulatory decisions, subsidies that basically amount to nothing less than corporate welfare, and a whole lot more that we'll probably never know about.

But now they're saying that there is not enough money left for the government to take care of the things that really matter like affordable health care, better schools, a cleaner environment, or a living minimum wage for the working poor. The very essence of the quality of life for working families. **And I'm here to tell you that not a whole lot is going to change anytime soon unless you decide to become a player in the game of politics.** Now I know what you are thinking. Gee Den, what can I do? I'm only one person. And yes we are all just working people. None of us are rich; none of us are above the law. But do you know what? The Big Corporations are. They think they can do anything they want. Why? Because the current administration lets them. They not only allow it, but they help them do it.

This administration also enjoys the support of the **fanatical right-wing factions** that are bent on taking control of the so-called "liberal press." You can't turn on the radio, TV, or pick up a newspaper without being **bombarded by their hate and fear tactics.** They use term like "crybaby labor unions" and "whiny minorities" while telling us we should "pull ourselves up by our proverbial bootstraps." At the conclusion of their programs I keep waiting for the President to appear so he can say, "I approved this message." So much for objective unbiased reporting.

And God forbid you should have the temerity to disagree with them. Because that's when they throw temper tantrums and go run and hide behind the flag. Then they're all about changing the subject and deflecting the responsibility of their actions onto someone or something else.

Let me give you a few examples. When you ask them about the UNFUNDED No Child Left Behind Initiative, they come back with Prayer in the Schools. When you try to get them to even admit that there is a Health Care crisis in this country, they resort to attacking a Woman's Right to Choose. When you bring up the subject of deficit spending, and the jobless economic recovery, they try to convince you that outsourcing is good for the economy. When you tell them you support the troops but not the war, they look at you like it's not possible to do one without the other.

Now I may be wrong, but **I highly doubt there's anyone by the name of Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, or Ashcroft being sent half-way around the world to be put in harms way so Halliburton can lay claim to the second largest oil reserve on the planet.** But do you know who is there? It's the men and women, the sons and daughters, and the brothers and sisters of the "crybaby unions" and "whiny minorities" that's who. And those people who saw the military as their chance to "pull themselves up by their bootstraps." Well they proudly served, only to find that their jobs weren't here for them when they returned, and their military benefits were being drastically reduced. Not to mention

the fact that their tours of duty were involuntarily extended past their discharge dates because of how dangerously thin our armed forces are stretched. So much for having a plan.

Somewhere along the line, we got turned around in this country. We don't work to live, we live to work. **The powers that be want you to go through life feeling lucky to have a job.** The current assault on organized labor began when the "beloved" Ronald Reagan busted the air controllers union in 1981, and has continued relentlessly to this day.

Personally, I judge most candidates on the age-old question of "Are you better off today than you were 4 years ago?" Well **WE** all know the answer to that question, which is probably why they're not asking it! But please, somebody tell me they have something more to offer than "If you don't vote for us, you'll die!"

Now while I don't buy into their predictions of gloom and doom, I can't help but make a few of my own. **BROTHERS AND SISTERS, THIS IS THE ELECTION OF OUR LIVES.** If we don't step up to the plate and take control of our futures now, there very likely will be no next time.

Please don't fall for their hate and fear bullshit!

This is the last time I'm going to say it folks, support your C.O.P.E. endorsed candidates. **IT'S IMPERATIVE THAT YOU GET OUT AND VOTE ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2ND . Our livelihoods and way of life depend on it!**

Thank you and God Bless.

Do you have a News Story?

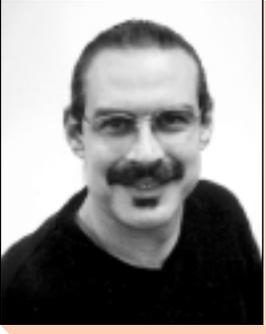
We need your contributions – on disk in Word format at the Union office (paper copy backup is a good idea) or simply paper copy. Or you could email an attachment in Word to both addresses as insurance.

Nancy North
nancy.north@comcast.net
Larry Moeller
ljm336@ameritech.net



What Are We About?

By Michael Sacco, Business Representative



As I talk to people about what I do for a living – both by people in and out of the union – I'm forced to think about not just what I do, but

as we – as a union – do.

What do I do? I work for President-Business Manager Kastner as his appointed agent to represent the interests of union members and our union in a specific area at SBC, the north and west sides of Chicago, Johnson Controls and statewide in the Datacomm unit. Like all other Business Reps, I'm responsible for the policing of the collective bargaining agreements, the training, counselling and supervision of Chief Stewards and Stewards and the assessment and advancement of grievances. The Business Rep is also responsible for the direct representation of members being terminated. We are also the voice of our units, giving feedback on the needs of our units. Along with all of that, reps are also the voice of the union leadership in the workplace.

Personally, I love my job. It is a tough one, but I'm honored to hold it and proud to represent my fellow workers. It can be a

challenge, but hopefully I do it with patience, skill and righteous determination. My job involves understanding the various jobs we do, the law, human relations, psychology, negotiations, politics and government.

And our union, what is it about? Unions are organized by workers in order to bargain collectively with our employers. **To advance all of us together as a group.** To make sure that all members are treated fairly. We accomplish this through organizing non-union workers to keep all wages at the industry standard, applying safe work rules, and educating workers on good choices for our individual and collective futures.

What about the members of our Union? Are we just about working and a paycheck? I don't think so. I believe our members have a duty to our co-workers and our families to work safe, to respect and enforce our contract, to be good citizens, to give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, and to be informed on what is happening to our jobs, our industry, and the world we leave to our kids.

By now you're asking, "what's the point?" The point is that we all have important duties we're responsible for. The most important duty we have this month is to put all of the b.s. aside. To put all of our single important issues aside and make a choice for the future of our great nation and our common good. **George W. Bush**

must not remain as President of the United States. Do I think John Kerry will make a great president? Maybe. He was not my first choice though. But Bush has been an absolute disaster for working Americans. Millions without jobs or healthcare. Broken promises on education, social security and the budget, to name a few. More to our concerns, a labor law and corporate system that has busted unions and driven down wages while squandering billions in pension assets to enrich a few wealthy friends.

Please, don't help re-elect Bush, based on his past record, there is no telling what he will do without having to please a constituency for re-election. The working and middle-classes will suffer even more than we have in the last four years. If it's your gun you're concerned with, don't sweat it. 40 years of gun control efforts and we have more guns than ever. That is not going to change, no matter who is president. Over 30 years of legalized abortion, 20 years of which abortion rights have been whittled down to the nub in court, and we still have abortions. This is also not going away. Do not think narrowly about these or other single issues. Think big. Think of the future. Think of our kids' future. **Hold your nose and vote for John Kerry**

The Mysterious Case of AG Communications

By Tom Hopper, Business Representative

During August of 2003, 250 members working for AG Communications mysteriously disappeared from the ranks of IBEW Local 21. The caper started when the company first integrated the workers into an installers' bargaining unit employed by Lucent Technologies. Next the company refused to recognize IBEW Local 21 as the workers' representative. Lastly, they illegally applied the terms of the collective bargaining agreement between Lucent Technologies and the CWA to the sisters and brothers of our union.

Every worker was impacted

negatively; many lost jobs due to subsequent layoff and since last year, the companies have refused to negotiate with IBEW Local 21 over these changes. Our union filed an unfair labor practice charge against AG and Lucent on October 22, 2003, charging that AG and Lucent, a single employer, violated the National Labor Relations Act by their blatant unilateral actions against the bargaining unit members and for refusing to negotiate.

In a surprising and uncharacteristic move, on September 2, 2004, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) issued a complaint against AG and

Lucent, for failing and refusing to bargain with IBEW Local 21 in violation of Sections 8(a)(1) and (5) of the Act. As part of the remedy for the unfair labor practices, the Board's General Counsel seeks an order that the company make the former IBEW Local 21 bargaining unit whole, and for all other relief as may be just and proper to remedy the unfair labor practices.

A hearing has been scheduled before an Administrative Law Judge of the NLRB, set to begin on November 16, 2004. This is a big, big decision by the Board and certainly a case to follow. Stay tuned.

The Haymarket Riot – The True Story

By Tom Hopper & Nancy North

Probably no single event has influenced the history of labor in Illinois, the United States, and even the world, more than the Chicago Haymarket Affair—both the riot and the trial.

In the 1880's Chicago was the fastest growing city in the world. The rich businessmen who settled from the East coast feared losing their political control of the city when the foreign-born voters began to outnumber the native-born voters. Each new ethnic immigrant group was only seen as cheap labor to be exploited.

The industrial revolution drew thousands of skilled craftsmen into factories and mills where jobs were simplified, performed by machines, or reduced to a single repetitive task. Men, women, and children worked ten, twelve, or fourteen hours a day. The eight-hour day laws for federal employees and workers in Illinois were not enforced.

In 1884 the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions passed a resolution that effective May 1, 1886, eight hours would constitute a legal day's work. The strategy was to pressure employers over the next two years with the possibility of nationwide strike. Although perhaps a simplistic solution to low wages and unemployment, **the "Eight-Hour Day Movement" captured the imagination of workers across the country**.

Planned for two years, the events of Saturday, May 1, 1886 were well organized. Across the country, over 340,000 workers shut down their factories. New York, Milwaukee, Baltimore, and Cincinnati had energetic participation, yet **the heart of the movement was focused in Chicago**. Albert Parsons, his wife Lucy, and their two children Albert Jr. and Lulu led 80,000 workers up Michigan Avenue singing arm-in-arm and carrying the banners of their unions, in what many historians now recognize as the first May Day parade. There was no violence, no conflict with police, and no blood.

On May 3rd, 1886, August Spies, editor of the Arbeiter-Zeitung spoke to a crowd of six thousand striking lumber workers and locked-out workers from the nearby McCormick Reaper Plant. Relations between workers and management had

deteriorated since Cyrus McCormick died in 1884. His son was dissatisfied with a 71% profit and cut the workers' wages. A successful strike in 1885 was followed by a lockout in March 1886. Management had brought in replacement workers to keep the plant running. At the end of their shift, several hundred scabs began leaving the plant and were taunted by the striking and locked-out workers. The Chicago Police Department arrived almost immediately and assaulted and shot at the strikers. Two men were killed and many were clubbed and beaten. Spies returned to his newspaper office and composed a flyer condemning the violence, using the figure of six deaths from the Chicago Daily News.

Later that evening, in a group of workers Gottfried Waller proposed a protest meeting against this kind of anti-union violence, but it was poorly planned. More than twenty thousand fliers were distributed to workers calling for attendance and participation. Mayor Carter Harrison issued a permit. **The meeting was scheduled to start at 7:30 May 4, 1886 in Haymarket Square** on Randolph Street between Desplaines and Halsted. Almost 2,500 people were milling about at 7:30, but no speakers arrived and many left in disgust. At 8:30 August Spies mounted a discarded old wagon parked in front of Crane's Alley on Desplaines Street, half a block north of the square. His speech condemned the forces responsible for the deaths of striking workers at the McCormick Plant the day before.

Spies sent a messenger to look for Albert Parsons or Samuel Fielden, or anyone else who could help him address the crowd. None of the speakers had participated in planning the event. Parsons and Fielden were at a meeting of sewing workers organized by Lucy Parsons and did not even know there was a rally until fifteen minutes before they spoke. Albert Parsons gave an inspirational speech on the overlying problems of society and left. By 10:00 only two hundred people were left to listen to Samuel Fielden, a Methodist preacher and leader in the community.

Mayor Harrison left the meeting at about 10:00, and rode about half a block south to the Desplaines Street police

station to tell Captain Bonfield to send his men home because the meeting was almost over. The mayor had agreed to station 176 policemen at the precinct in case of trouble. Then the mayor briefly returned to the meeting. Policemen dressed as workers reported back to Bonfield when the mayor left.

Bonfield and Ward ordered their men to disburse the meeting. 176 policemen armed with the latest technology Winchester rifles, marched up Desplaines Street in a new military formation for crowd control. It began to rain. Police also clubbed patrons leaving a nearby theatre. The workers retreated northward. Suddenly, **from a store vestibule behind the policemen, someone threw a dynamite bomb into the front lines of the police, where the workers stood only seconds before**. It was the first dynamite bomb ever used in peacetime in the United States.

The police panicked, opened fire, and in the darkness many shot at their own men. Eventually seven policemen died, only one directly accountable to the bomb, the rest from friendly fire. Four workers were also killed. It is not known to this day who threw the bomb. One theory is Rudolph Schnaubelt, who may have been an agent of the police and businessmen, and paid to throw the bomb into the crowd of workers, but the police pushed them north of the alley too quickly.

The next day martial law was declared, not just in Chicago, but across the nation. Anti-labor governments around the world used the Chicago incident to crush local union movements. In Chicago, State's Attorney Julius Grinnell stated that the police who made the raids on May 5th should disregard the law. Hundreds of people were arrested for no reason. Labor leaders were rounded up, houses were entered without search warrants, unions were raided, and union newspapers were shut down.

The eight-hour movement immediately stopped as the crackdown continued on workers, meetings, organizations and anywhere else the "law" felt was necessary. Newspapers screamed for blood. Of the hundreds of labor, anarchist and

community leaders arrested, only 31 were indicted, and this number was cut to eleven. Gottfried Waller and William Seigler were never brought to trial because they agreed to turn state's witnesses. Rudolph Schnaubelt was never found. Only eight men were tried, and only two of these men were at Haymarket Square when the bomb was thrown.

The Haymarket Eight represented a cross section of the labor movement: a

they were responsible for the throwing of the bomb. **From the beginning Judge Joseph Gary made the trial a travesty of justice**. Only jurors who already believed the men guilty were chosen. No tangible evidence ever presented. In his closing remarks, prosecuting attorney Julius Grinnell made it clear **that the trial was about ideas, not deeds**. All were found guilty, eventually all but Oscar Neebe were sentenced to death.

before the execution. On November 10th Samuel Gompers arrived from Washington and convinced Governor Oglesby to change the sentences of Samuel Fielden and Michael Schwab to imprisonment for life.

On the morning of November 10th, Louis Lingg was found in his cell, his head half blown off by a dynamite cap.

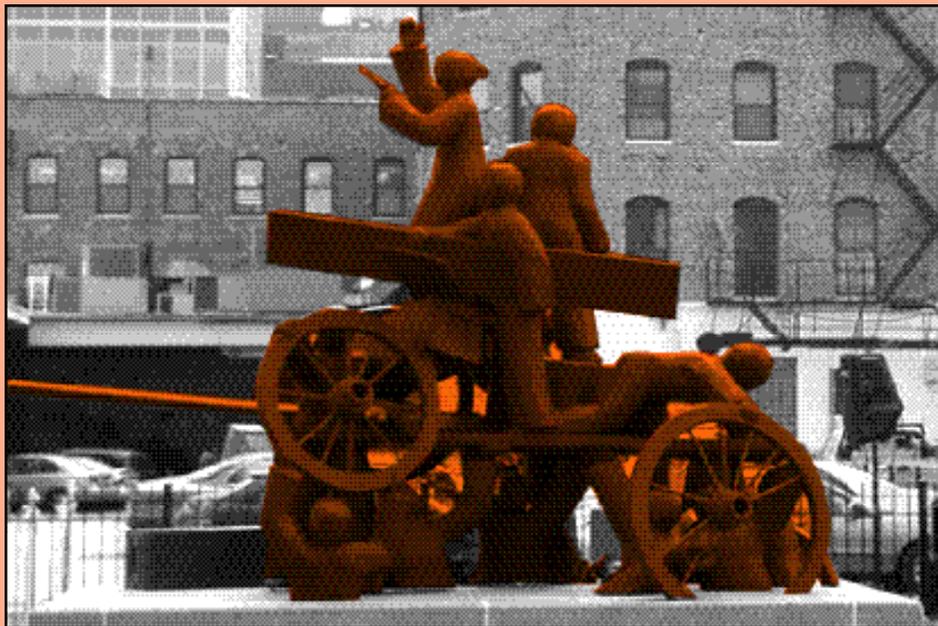
The families of the condemned men thought they would be able to see them early in the morning of November 11th, but they were either arrested or turned away by the police. By noon Parsons, Spies, Engel and Fischer were executed by hanging on a gallows built in the alley between the County Courthouse and the County Jail. Just off Dearborn and Hubbard Streets, a select crowd of 200 businessmen watched the execution.

On Sunday November 13th, the funeral began at noon with thousands of workers marching from home to home to pick up the bodies of each of the martyrs. Nearly half a million people watched them travel down Milwaukee Avenue to downtown. Then the workers traveled west by train to the gravesite in German Walheim Cemetery in Forest Park.

At an international labor conference held in Europe in 1889, a resolution was adopted to make May 1st of every year the day workers around the world would now celebrate in solidarity. In June of 1893, Illinois Governor John Peter Altgeld pardoned those still alive, Neebe, Fielden, and Schwab.

Throughout the world **May 1st is a continual reminder of working class struggles** and the fight for free speech, the rights of minorities, the right to organize around issues, and the right to join labor unions. Although May Day is celebrated everywhere else in the world, in the U.S. it was changed to Law Day and workers in the US and Canada celebrate Labor Day on the first Monday in September.

Sources include: *Haymarket Revisted* by William J. Adelman, "Illinois Forgotten Labor History" in *Illinois Issues* by William J. Adleman, and *The Making of American Society* by Edwin C. Rozwenc. *Chicago Tribune* 9-15-2004.



In a ceremony on September 14, 2004, a fitting monument was dedicated to honor the workers' struggle at Haymarket Square. Chicago artist Mary Brogger depicted the speakers' wagon in 3,200 pounds of rust colored bronze. The wagon, with a faceless human figure apparently orating atop it, is coming apart. More faceless figures are beneath and beside it, holding, pushing or pulling the wagon. Mary Brogger explained, "These figures are engaged with either building or dismantling the wagon. So it gives us the duality showing that the truth in any movement is complicated." The statue sits near the corner of Randolph & Desplaines in Chicago.

militant preacher, trade union organizers, members of the labor press, and men involved in community and political action. The trial opened on June 21, 1886 with seven defendants: **August Spies, George Engel, Adolph Fischer, Samuel Fielden, Louis Lingg, Michael Schwab, and Oscar Neebe**. Knowing he was innocent and believing he would be exonerated, **Albert Parsons** returned from Wisconsin to stand trial with his friends.

The sixty-nine discordant charges included speaking in groups and openly criticizing corporate America, therefore

The massive crackdown of basic rights in America, along with a sham trial, led to a world wide outcry. Protests and rallies were held across the globe.

The actual hanging was delayed by an appeal to the Illinois Supreme Court. It was denied on the basis that Socialism was the advocacy of the theft of private property, and the jurors had the right to be prejudiced against Socialist defendants. The execution date was set for November 11, 1887.

The appeal to the United States Supreme Court was denied nine days

Another View: The Pentagon's Revolving Door

by Jim Hightower

Time for another Gooberhead Award – presented periodically to those in the news who have their tongues going 100 miles per hour...but who forgot to put their brains in gear. Today, I've got a whole nest of Goobers for you all of whom are nesting in the fraud-ridden Pentagon...except when they fly that coop to feather their nests with top jobs at Lockheed, Boeing, Halliburton, and other corporations that pocket billions in bloated Pentagon contracts. The scam of such Goobers is to work awhile at the Pentagon, gain insider knowledge and contacts, then peddle their insider connections to corporations wanting more fat contracts from us taxpayers.

Take Pete Aldridge, who has made a career of spinning in and out of the revolving door between the Pentagon and military contractors. He was secretary of the air force, then he left to become president of air force contractor McDonnell Douglas. Then George W. brought him back inside to be in charge of all Pentagon purchases. Last year, he left again, this time to become a highly-paid board member at Lockheed. But just before leaving, he personally approved a \$3 billion contract for 20 jet-fighters to be made by – you guessed it – Lockheed.

Even while Pete's on Lockheed's payroll, Bush named him chairman of a space exploration commission. Pete's commission recently called for privatizing NASA. Guess what corporation stands to gain the most from such a move? Did you say Lockheed? Bingo!

About his glaring conflicts of interest, Pete simply declares that he's in compliance with current ethics laws. But, of course, these laws are shams, written by lobbyists for Goobers like Pete. "Legal" isn't the same as moral. To learn more about all the Petes now nesting in top jobs with military contractors, call the Project on Government Oversight: 202-347-1122.

– Jim Hightower's newest book is *Let's Stop Beating Around the Bush*.

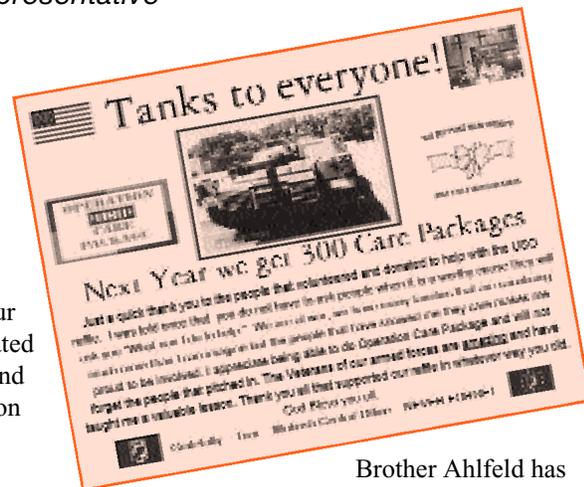
Helping America's Sons and Daughters

By Tom Hopper, Business Representative

Volunteering to help others is one of many core values of a good union member. Tom Ahlfeld, an IBEW Local 21 member working out of the Wabash Central Office in Chicago, is such a person. Brother Ahlfeld worked tirelessly over the last year in his efforts to support our troops through the USO. Tom coordinated a very successful raffle raising funds and other donations, conducting the raffle on September 10, 2004 on a sunny day in front of the Wabash C.O.

Whatever our opinions about the reasons for going to war in Iraq, it's clear that the men and women in the armed forces serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other perilous places throughout the world have the full support of our union. Some are the sons and daughters of IBEW Local 21 members, and others are brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, even members themselves.

Since before the United States entered World War II, the USO (United Service Organizations) has been a bridge between the American people and the U.S. military. In times of peace and war, the USO has consistently delivered its special brand of comfort, morale and recreational services to service members and their families. A nonprofit, congressionally chartered, private organization, the USO relies on the generosity of individuals, organizations and corporations to support USO activities.



Brother Ahlfeld has already begun preparations for next year's raffle, yet took the time to share his thoughts and thanks for this year's event, in a message titled *Tanks to Everyone!*

Next Year we get 300 Care Packages

Just a quick thank you to the people that volunteered and donated to help with the USO raffle. I was told once that you do not have to ask people when it is a worthy cause they will ask you "What can I do to help?" We are at war, we have many families that are sacrificing much more than I can imagine but the people that have showed me they care makes me proud to be involved. I appreciate being able to do Operation Care package and will not forget the people that pitched in. The Veterans of our armed forces are amazing and have taught me a valuable lesson. Thank you all that supported our raffle in whatever way you did.

God Bless you all.
Gratefully - Tom -
Wabash Central Office -
NEVER FORGET .

Brother Ahlfeld, we won't forget. Thank you for your kindheartedness and for reminding us all what it truly means to be Union.

Restoring the Right to Organize

Part 3: Why Workers Can't Get Unions

By David Webster, Business Representative



The Freedom to choose is a fundamental human and legal right. "Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protections of his interests" – Universal

Declaration of Human Rights – 1948
"Employees shall have the right to...form... labor organizations (and) to bargain collectively It shall be an unfair labor practice for an employer to interfere with...the exercise of (these) rights" – National Labor Relations Act – 1935

But whatever the law may say, it's important to look the reality workers face when they seek to exercise their legal right to organize. The sad truth is that American workers are losing the freedom to form unions and bargain collectively. Twenty-eight million workers are excluded by law when it comes to organizing a union and bargaining collectively. They include: Farm workers, Independent contractors, Supervisors, Domestic Workers, Public employees in 14 states, Airport Security Workers and Department of Homeland

Security Employees. For those lucky enough to be covered by the law, the system designed to protect workers right to organize is broken.! Employers routinely violate the law with impunity. The right to organize no longer exists in America.

Employers are waging a war on workers. Employers fire union supporters in 25% of union campaigns. Companies have supervisors conduct intimidating one-on-one meetings with worker in 78% of campaigns. Employers threaten plant closings in 51% of campaigns. Employers send anti-union letters to workers' homes in 70% of campaigns and employers hold captive audience meetings in 92% of campaigns. A union campaign would be like a congressional election where only the incumbent has access to voters, the challenger is excluded from the district, and the losing incumbent can prevent the victor from ever taking office!

What do people think about the employers' war on workers? Overwhelming numbers of our members think that it's unacceptable for employers to interfere with the freedom to form unions. Unfortunately, only a tiny fraction of them know about the employers anti-union tactics. 96% of union members feel that it is unacceptable for employers to fire employees who support the union, but only



"Security squad? No, they go after union organizers."

20% believe that is happens regularly. 91% believe that it would be wrong for supervisors to urge individual employees to vote against the union, while 22% realize that it happens all the time. The opinions of the general public show similar percentages.

We have an obligation to shine the light of attention on these terrible tactics of employer abuse and educate our fellow union members and the general public about the reality that the right-to organize in the U.S. only exists in theory. We must redouble our efforts to support workers who are struggling to win collective bargaining, by exposing and embarrassing their anti-labor employers.

Of all the rights and liberties we hold dear, freedom of assembly, speech, press, religion etc. workers exercise only one--the legal right to form a union--with a real sense of great fear. All liberties and rights captured in our Constitution are left at the doorstep once we enter the employer's threshold. Of those workers who beat the employers anti-union campaign, 32% still don't have a contract a year later, due to the employer's common tool....delay and deception. With card check and neutrality agreements win rates jump from 50% to about 80%. While employer interference and misconduct was once considered unacceptable, today, without any change in the law, employers routinely and ruthlessly violate workers rights with impunity. They are considered foolish by their peers if they don't not push the limits of the law to crush workers trying to organize. The problem is clearly intensifying and the agencies charged with protecting the legal right to organize (the NLRB in the private sector) are now powerless.

No one seems to know about the secret war employers wage on workers. We must lift the veil of secrecy, inform our fellow members and larger community about the truth: The right to organize and the freedom to form a union no longer exists in the United States. Next issue in part four we will discuss what we're doing about it.

Scholarship Winner

David Merchant, son of Local 21 Sister Karleen Merchant received a \$1,000 Union Plus college scholarship award. He was one of 106 students from 38 AFL-CIO unions who have been awarded \$150,000 in scholarships from the Union Plus Scholarship program.

David Merchant is a graduating senior with a 3.87 grade point average. He will attend Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., this fall as an accounting major. His academic achievements include being named a 2003-2004 Illinois State Scholar and a member of the 2003 Academic All-State Football Team.

An outstanding student, athletics are where his passion lies. He played football, basketball and baseball for four years in high school. He also is a member of the 2003 Mid-Northern Honors Band. Merchant is active in his community through volunteer work with the Seward Congregational Church Youth Group.

While nurturing his intellectual and career interests, he also will play for the Creighton Blue Jays baseball team.

Coming from a home with two union parents (his dad, James, is a member of the Teamsters), Merchant embodies the values of a family whose foundation is built on hard work. "Even though my mother has what some consider an occupation for a man, because of the union she has been given the opportunity to be successful and has been treated with fairness and equality. In a non-union environment, it would have been much different."

2005 Applications

Applications for the 2005 awards are available online at the Union Privilege website: www.unionplus.org/scholarships. Or, send a postcard with your name, return address, telephone number and international union affiliation to: Union Plus Education Foundation, c/o Union Privilege, P.O. Box 34800, Washington, D.C. 20043-4800. The application deadline is Jan. 31, 2005.

Rep Fest 2004

By KC Coates, Area Steward

The Arlington Heights Consumer Care Center kicked off the Labor Day weekend with **Rep Fest 2004** in their parking lot on Friday Sept 3rd in parking lot. It's imperative that our members understand the significance of Labor Day, and that it celebrates the gains of organized labor. For almost six weeks members and management alike spent time helping with fundraisers to make the festival a success. The menu consisted of hamburgers, ribs, chicken breast, mostaccioli and corn on the cob. I think the most interesting idea came from member Dee Fudala – roasting a pig on a spit. We played music, double dutch, and basketball. Many of the management staff agreed to enter a dunk tank. A great time was had by all!



If I had a Hammer...If I had a Bell...

By Nancy North, Area Steward



In mid-September Dad and I took our annual road trip to visit Aunt Bernice in southern Illinois. She lives in a small town, and after

dinner all Dad wants to do is watch a little television. Her local PBS station was in the middle of a pledge drive and they broadcast a special on Peter, Paul and Mary.

They sang at a number of large protest rallies in Washington D.C. and I noticed something I'd never seen in film excerpts from the sixties before. The people behind the "speakers" were smiling. Now maybe it's just because the music was good, or maybe it was because they were happy they could make a difference.

People believed they could change the world for the better – that everyone deserved a modestly comfortable life, a say in the decisions that affect them, and a chance to develop their potential.

I still believe that my safety and freedom can be no greater than how much I'm willing to share that safety and freedom with my neighbor. I believe America should be a good neighbor in the world community – not a fortress.

On November 2nd we all have a chance to stand up for ourselves, and we don't need to travel to Washington D.C. – only the nearest polling place a few blocks away. Me? **I'm voting for John Kerry.** Why? Because he's smart, articulate, and compassionate. Because we all deserve a better chance. No matter how much overtime I work, I don't think I can ever become one of those rich people who are served so well by the Bush administration. I want a better future for everyone. Vote.

Shopping Early?

www.ShopUnionMade.org offers a wide selection of union-made items, including:
Clothing, Shoes & Accessories;
Books & Magazines; Artwork & Posters; Greeting Cards & Gift Wrap; Computers; Flowers;
Food & Beverages; Sports Equipment and Toys & Games.

Complete information about all Union Privilege services is available online at www.unionprivilege.org.

Moving on Up, Moving on Out

By Michael O'Connor, Chief Steward



Well, we ratified a new contract with an over 80 percent yes vote and before we get the contracts printed, the bloom is off the

deal. If you haven't noticed, management is on the warpath and you should expect no different through the end of the year.

After extending the suburban detail assignments repeatedly, SBC dropped the bomb that **105 techs in Chicago will be preferenced to suburban locations in permanent headcount realignment.** Previously, the company extended the detail assignments of city techs twice on the very day the new six week schedule was due to be posted, forcing stewards and craftspeople to scramble to fill the weekends that those techs had already been assigned in their home garages. That meant the rest of you had to pick up extra weekends and now you get to do it forever, because in Chicago, 105 of your co-workers are dust in the wind.

Scheduling is the number one concern in the garages! SBC rolled out a new methodology for weekend scheduling that uses the MOST data to establish the "true" run-rate or efficiency for the weekends worked. **MOST is your GJ18 data on steroids.** It links your WFA load to your vehicle GPS, includes real-time dispatch info, your fuel card usage and cell phone minutes in a single database that every manager can access and manipulate. It is simply too easy for the company to track what we do on a daily basis. So for the sake of your pension do NOT use any company tools, equipment or service for non-business purposes.

Mid-September marks the last financial quarter for most companies. This means pressure for expense reduction and increased productivity. Now, we can only do what we can do in 8 hours, but let's be sure we are giving 420 minutes of work in each of those days. The company's focus, especially in the city, will be last job of the day productivity. Make your premise visits, pre-call the customer

and leave an N-A card if no one is home. Do not make it easy for SBC to come after your job.

Unjust scheduling continues in the CO world. Members are denied EWD and day-at-a-time-vacation before the agreed-to number is reached. It seems that any manager who is shorthanded can close the week, shafting members in any other office. We are almost on top of the vacation selections for 2005 and we can't get the employer to follow the guidelines it agreed to in 2004!

Safety is a big topic this fall. Again, do not do harm to yourself by ignoring established safety practices. Please follow the six life-saving behaviors. If you can't work safe, don't do the job. If we are complicit in working unsafe, there is one less argument we have in the face of the company's productivity steamroller. Do not climb poles that have been tagged unsafe. Do not work on X-Boxes without balconies. If you have to make a non-standard ladder placement, document the reasons and secure your ladder the best way possible-before you climb. The union will not win at arbitration any grievance for ignoring these practices. **At the turn of the century, when a bucket truck was a two-story stagecoach pulled by a team of horses, the fatality rate for linemen in the Bell System was 50 PERCENT!** That ratio has declined dramatically, not because of the employer, but because unions demanded and won company provided safety gear.

☞ **Everyone should make their own informed choice on Election Day.** It's a right we enjoy that most people in the world only dream of exercising. But there is a reason that this union is endorsing Kerry, Edwards, and Obama. Do you remember the flyers we posted on the bulletin boards before the contract? One of them spelled out all the great social advancements that American society had made in this century. From the inspection of meat in packing houses to the elimination of child labor; from the Civil Rights Act to the Clean Air and Water Acts; all these things were initiated or supported by Organized Labor. You know what else; all of them were opposed by Big Business.

The Global Market drain on American Jobs and the massive deficits run up by an immoral war are but two reasons to reject this Administration's plan for our future. For this Administration it is hard to imagine that poor and working people even exist in this country. The very first thing the President did in office was quash the ergonomic standards for workers in the OSHA code. He used the Homeland Security Bill to deny union rights to all the workers in the TSA. His recent overhaul of overtime rules is a blatant assault on the 40 hour week and nothing less.

Please read up on the issues, be informed when you enter the polls. Do not let your position on one issue influence your entire vote! If this President is returned with no check on his authority, working people in this country are dead.

Members marched in the Springfield Labor Day Parade



Special thanks to
Chief Steward
Mike Roach
Stewards
Amber Shipman
Mike Shipman
Tammy Baker
Ernest Baker

Single Issue Voting The Issue That Should be Most Important to You...

By Bob Przybylinski, Area Steward



The election is right around the corner. I've heard a lot of reasons on why people are going to vote for George W. Bush. They've

ranged from his position on abortion, gun control, tax breaks, and handling of the war. Others are voting for him because they don't want their tax dollars going to the under privileged, and one of the best yet came from my Mom "He really cares about me, he sent me a letter." Thankfully it wasn't from the IRS-my 85-year old grandmother got that one.

Now war records are distracting us. Is that what this election is really about? Do we really care about Kerry's Purple Heart or Bush's military record?

Bush has claimed homeland security has improved since the attacks. But has it really? **Has your security at home improved?** Have the hard working people of this country had a fighting chance to raise a family without worrying where their next paycheck is coming from? Will the parents of today's children be able to provide them with a future better than they had? **No!**

It's time for a reality check. We are all **working** people. Some of us lead very good lives because of the hard work we have put in and the overtime **we have had to work** to provide the many extras for our families. Let's not fool ourselves. It doesn't matter what our income was last year, we are still blue collar Union members. George W. Bush will do whatever it takes to destroy our livelihoods to protect the interests of his corporate peers. I know I've turned off all the Republicans out there right now but I ask all of you to keep reading, *I was once a Republican.*

We must look at **the most important single issue** facing us in this election. The issue is **do we have "security at home" will we be able continue to provide our families?** George Bush has attacked

working people since he took office.

Let's see how we have been attacked.

These are the facts, these are experiences I've had since becoming involved in the Union movement.

On Safety: Starting in March 2001 Bush supported and signed the first-ever congressional **repeal** of an Occupational Safety and Health Administration worker protection rule, killing OSHA's ergonomics standard that would have prevented hundreds of thousands of workplace injuries each year, such as carpal tunnel syndrome. His signature overturned more than a decade of work by OSHA.

Then **Bush attacked our pocketbooks.** The attack on overtime has been raging since the middle of last year. George Bush and his labor secretary Elaine Chao keep attempting to eliminate the 40-hour workweek and guaranteed overtime. Today millions of workers have lost their ability to earn the extra income their families need to survive because their jobs have been reclassified and they are now no longer eligible for overtime payments.

Bush proposes "flextime," allowing the substitution of "comp time" for the payment of time-and-a-half overtime pay. I can hear many of you saying, "Yeah, but I still have mine." There is the risk that when our contracts expire it will be harder to retain our overtime payment if there are laws denying non-union workers the right to collect that extra income.

Our greatest concern with regards to the Bush Administration has been **the attack on Unions** and the rights of workers that want to join Unions. Many Americans say the country is safer because of the Patriot Act. However, it attacks American workers. The Patriot Act gutted the collective bargaining rights and civil service rights of tens of thousands of federal workers.

The National Labor Relations Board governs the actions of Unions and the companies that are unionized. Republicans have a 3-2 majority on the NLRB, because of the appointments made by President Bush. Our Local has filed numerous complaints against both Comcast and SBC for violations of the National Labor Relations Act. Almost all of those Unfair

Labor Charges filed go unanswered because the NLRB is on the side of the corporations. The Labor Board can no longer be relied upon to protect the workers for which the laws were written. Our security at home is in jeopardy.

Democratic administrations have supported the rights of working people. John Kerry and John Edward have vowed to sign **the Employee Free Choice Act.** This Act will allow workers to join unions without the restraints currently placed on them by the National Labor Relations Act. The Employee Free Choice Act will also offer protections to workers when bargaining a first contract with their employer. This Act will balance the power between corporate America and the American worker.

Unions currently represent 13% of the US workforce. It is the goal of corporate America and the current administration in Washington to reduce that number to fewer than 5% making Unions insignificant in this country. The Union worker in this country while growing fewer in numbers carries significant weight in the voting booth. Nearly 25% of the voters in the 2000 election belong to Union households. We have the power to make a change. We need to get out and vote for the candidates who will help our families at home. We need a change in the White House. We need the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act.

I can appreciate the other single issues that affect the way we vote. I cannot think of another issue that affects all of us. If we cannot guarantee job security, wages and benefits for our families none of the other single voting issues really matter. We will never be able to see their benefits if we cannot provide for our families. This election will probably be the most important election we have ever been apart of the results of it can be devastating if we do not have the courage to vote a change in the November election.

For more information on how President Bush has attacked the rights of working people visit our website www.ibew21.org and click on the Bush Watch link.

Iraq Labor Repression Thrived Under Occupation

An investigative story about the status of unions in Iraq – before and during U.S. occupation – has been named one of 25 major news stories of social significance that have been over-looked, under-reported or self-censored by the country's major national news media.

Originally published in The Progressive in December 2003, and authored by labor journalist David Bacon, "Saddam's Labor Laws Live On" was part of the annual list of censored news cited by Project Censored.

The story details how many Iraqi workers hoped Saddam's fall would liberate them from repressive labor laws that prevented them from forming unions and bargaining. A 1987 decree by Saddam had reclassified most Iraqi workers as civil servants, and therefore unable to exercise basic rights to organize.

"The occupation, however, didn't lift this decree... While keeping in place the ban on unions, the occupation forces have kept wages low and unemployment high." The article further exposes the U.S.'s intention to help privatize most Iraqi factories and workplaces – perhaps not surprising when juxtaposed with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's efforts to weaken unions within his own civilian workforce here at home. Read more of the story at www.progressive.org/dec03/bac1203.html.

CONGRATULATIONS LOCAL 21 RETIREES

February / March 2004

Laurice Story
Inice Ledet
Laura Rowland
Mike Gruber

April / May 2004

David Johnson
E Delores Harmony

June / July 2004

Doris King
Vivian Mc Kenney
Arnold Curry
Terry Smith
Bob Stratton
Juanita Sheffield

August / September 2004

June Rakoczy
Sandra Davis
Mark Gauger
Terry Littrel
Debra Bey
Bertha Clark
Carmen Hernandez
Joanne Withington
John Fleischli

October 2004

Pam Cooper
Richard Brittain
Linda Prichett

Information Alert

Members must be in good standing for 10 consecutive years with IBEW Local 21 (or former Locals 165, 188, 336, 383, or 399) immediately preceding their retirement in order to receive a retirement from the Local Union. These members must be severing their employment with the employer. Stewards, Area Stewards, Chief Stewards, and Business Reps can request applications by calling Nancy Kopydlowski at the union office 630 960-4466 X234.

The Rat in the Woods...

Comcast held its annual Comcast Cares Day on Saturday October 2 at many communities it serves, hoping to show the public it really cares by performing acts of public service while ignoring the needs of its workers. Comcast decided to clean up Busse Woods, a Forest Preserve in Elk Grove Village. When Comcast's top level management team arrived they found there was a Rat in the woods revealing a secret they've been trying to hide from the public—Comcast doesn't really Care. Comcast workers have been without a contract for over 5 years. They've been fighting against increased health care costs, for higher wages, and job security after the many layoffs since Comcast bought AT&T Broadband. With the support from other AFL-CIO Unions, such as SEIU, Unite HERE, and members from other IBEW locals, Comcast workers exposed the hypocrisies of the company. Executives can't hide behind the veil of corporate responsibility. The secrets will be unearthed. The Rat in the Woods is just the beginning.



...Comca\$ Care\$?

IBEW LOCAL 21

1307 W. Butterfield Rd.
Suite 422
Downers Grove, IL 60515-5601



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UNIT MEETINGS 2004

NOVEMBER

Unit 1

Thursday, November 11, 7 PM
Days Inn & Suites
2175 E Touhy
DesPlaines IL
847 635-1300

Unit 2

Tuesday, November 9, 7 PM
Gaelic Park Banquet Hall
6119 W 147th St.
Oak Forest IL
708 687-9323

Unit 3

Thursday, November 18, 7 PM
Gurnee American Legion
749 Milwaukee Ave
Gurnee IL
847 244-9282

Unit 4

Wednesday, November 10, 7 PM
IBEW Local #145
1700 52nd Ave Suite A
Moline IL
309 736-4239

Unit 5

Wednesday, November 17, 7 PM
VFW Post #630
1303 E Main St
Urbana IL
217 367-4197

Unit 6

Tuesday, November 16, 5:30 PM
IBEW Local # 193
3150 Wide Track Dr
Springfield IL
217 544-3479

Unit 7

Monday, November 15, 7 PM
American Legion Post #141
916 Main St
Mt Vernon IL
618 242-4561