

GMP *Horizons*

July 2008

Serving Workers in the Glass, Metal,

Pottery and Plastics Industries



GMP Supports Barack Obama

Notice of Nominations and Elections
appear on page 9



Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics & Allied Workers, AFL-CIO, CLC
608 East Baltimore Pike, P.O. Box 607, Media, Pa. 19063

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Staff

RICHARD KLINE
Director of Communications

FRANK GROTTI
Director of Research and Education

FRED NEIBAUER, CPA
Controller

BRENDA SCOTLAND
Director of Organizing

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International President

BRUCE R. SMITH
International Secretary-Treasurer

WALTER THORN
Vice President

WESLEY ROYSTER
Area Director

P.O. Box 1978
608 East Baltimore Pike
Media, PA 19063

FRANK J. BRANDAO, SR.
Vice President

P.O. Box 1978
608 E. Baltimore Pike
Media PA 19063

IGNACIO DE LA FUENTE
Vice President

P.O. Box 1978
608 E. Baltimore Pike
Media PA 19063

DAVID DOYLE
Vice President

P.O. Box 20133
Woodstock, Ontario N4S 8X8
Canada

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JOHN P. RYAN
International President

“A champion for working people who knows what it’s going to take to create an economy that works for everyone...”

GMP Endorses Obama for President

The GMP has joined with the rest of the Labor Movement in endorsing Barack Obama for President. Obama is far and away the better of the two major candidates with respect to issues that affect working people.

“In so many ways - on jobs, health care, gas prices and the war in Iraq - our country is headed in the wrong direction,” AFL-CIO President John Sweeney said when the labor federation endorsed Obama. Sweeney went on to say that Barack Obama had proven his commitment to working people in his service as a community organizer, a U.S. Senator from Illinois and his campaign for the presidency.

“A champion for working people who knows what it’s going to take to create an economy that works for everyone, not just Big Oil, Big Pharmaceuticals, the insurance companies, the giant mortgage lenders, speculators and the very wealthy” is how Sweeney characterized Obama.

By contrast, John McCain, the GOP candidate, reveals at every turn his devotion to the failed policies of the Bush administration. His campaign managers are largely corporate lobbyists, guaranteeing the corporate favoritism of his platform.

Briefly, to name but a few of McCain’s worst notions, just consider:

- He thinks we’re better off now than eight years ago.
- He wants to tax corporations less while cutting key working family programs.
- He voted to eliminate the minimum wage.
- He proposes taxing health benefits.
- He voted for Nafta, Cafta, and other rotten trade agreements and voted for giving Bush “Fast Track” authority to sign more bad trade deals.
- He voted against the Employee Free Choice Act.
- He wants to replace Social Security with privatized accounts.
- He supported George W. Bush 89 percent of the time and 97 percent in 2007 when he carried favor with Bush.

This is a long list, but unfortunately, it is not exhaustive. Plenty more negatives can be attached to McCain.

In contrast, Labor’s candidate is a man of the people who knows how average Americans are struggling. He has developed a program to address the problems facing our country.

Barack Obama has voted against Bush tax cuts for the rich while supporting relief for homeowners facing foreclosure. He proposes larger tax cuts for working people than McCain.

Obama plans to strengthen the renewable energy sector to create new jobs. Unlike McCain, he voted against privatizing federal jobs. He supports Davis-Bacon and Project Labor Agreements. He voted to raise the minimum wage.

Obama has called for universal health care and pledged that the 45 million Americans without health insurance will have it after his plan is implemented.

Obama opposes tax breaks for companies that export jobs. He voted against Cafta and will support only those trade agreements with strong labor and environmental protections. He wants to renegotiate Nafta or opt out of it. He wants to extend trade adjustment assistance for displaced workers.

Obama voted for the Employee Free Choice Act, and if elected president, he will sign the measure.

Obama supports the Social Security System. He has pledged not to cut benefits or raise the retirement age. He opposed steep increases in Medicare premiums.

One could go on, but the facts are already plain, Obama is the best choice for working people. I encourage every GMP member to learn all he or she can about both Barack Obama and his opponent. Then go out and convince family and friends to vote for Barack Obama, the best choice for Labor, working families and the United States of America.

GMP Visits Local Union 257B at D.W. Clark in E. Bridgewater, MA

International Representative Hector Sanchez recently met with officers and members of Local 257B as he toured the D.W. Clark facility.

D. W. Clark, Inc., located on N. Bedford Street in E. Bridgewater, Massachusetts, is a ferrous foundry that manufactures industrial supplies that include valve bodies and turbine rings. Approximately 20 Local 257B members are employed at this facility.

The officers of Local 257B, Nashua, New Hampshire, are - President Charles Langais, Vice President Brian Allison, Recording Secretary Richard Ledoux and Financial Secretary Eileen Theberge. Local 257B was chartered in 1896.



International Representative Hector Sanchez recently toured the D. W. Clark facility. Seen here (L-R): Arnaldo Nunes, Manny Moreira and Dave Burek.



Seen here (L-R): Joe Livreso and Local 257B Shop Steward Jose Rocha.



(L-R): Shop Steward Jose Rocha and Francisco Comes.



(L-R): Francisco Brito and Rocha.



Wal-Mart Violated Worker Rights More Than 2 Million Times Minnesota Judge Rules

In what may well be a world record, Wal-Mart, the world's largest retailer known for its virulent anti-worker and anti-union stands, broke labor law more than 2 million times over a 6-year period by denying workers time for breaks and forcing them to work "off the clock" for no pay, a Minnesota judge has ruled.

Dakota County District Judge Robert King ordered the monster retailer to pay wronged workers \$6.5 million in back pay. In addition, Wal-Mart faces fines as high as \$2 billion for the wage-and-hour violations.

King's ruling culminated a 7-year legal battle by four former Wal-Mart workers who filed a class-action lawsuit on behalf of 56,000 current and former employees who worked at Minnesota Wal-Mart and Sam's Club stores between Sept. 11, 1998, and Jan. 31, 2004.

And his ruling echoes similar judgments against Wal-Mart for breaking wage-and-hour laws in other states, including Oregon, California, Colorado and Pennsylvania. Those workers have also won tens of thousands of dollars in back pay.

"I was treated like so many of my co-workers," said Nancy Braun of Rochester, Minn., one of the four plaintiffs. "There was just too much work to do and never enough time to do it. There just wasn't enough time in the day to take the breaks we were entitled to."

Judge King found Wal-Mart repeatedly and willfully violated Minnesota labor laws or its contract with its employees on the issues of contractual rest breaks, statutory meal breaks, shaving time from paid rest breaks and failure to maintain accurate records.

He also found Wal-Mart was aware its employees were not receiving breaks to which they were entitled. "In essence, they (Wal-Mart) put their heads in the sand," King stated.

Minnesota law requires every employer to provide its employees with a sufficient time to eat a meal. Wal-Mart wouldn't let them eat. King stated: "No time to eat a meal is not a sufficient time to eat a meal." He found Wal-Mart violated the meal break law alone 73,864 times.

The judge ordered a second phase of the trial to begin Oct. 20 to allow a jury to determine the amount of punitive damages and the amount of statutory penalties to be imposed against Wal-Mart. Minnesota's wage-and-hour laws allow for a penalty of up to \$1,000 for each violation. If the jury awards the full \$1,000 penalty for

each of the 2 million violations, the award could be in excess of \$2 billion.

"This first award from Judge King is just the beginning," said William Sieben, one of the attorneys representing the workers. "This award only reimburses these employees for compensation they should have already received from Wal-Mart. The next phase of the trial will be to punish and penalize Wal-Mart for willfully violating the rights of these 56,000 people whose average wage was under \$10 an hour."

In testimony that began last September, attorneys presented mountains of evidence—everything from payroll records, tax records, and company reports to memos and e-mails. Wal-Mart, the world's largest employer, keeps voluminous records on all its stores on a computer larger than the one in the Pentagon. Attorneys for the workers were able to use the company's own records against it.

Wal-Mart executives are considering an appeal. "We respectfully disagree with portions of the decision," spokeswoman Daphne Moore told the Reuters news agency.

The company's 2006 Annual Report stated that Wal-Mart faced 57 wage-and-hour lawsuits across the United States, including the Minnesota case.

In December 2005, a California court ordered Wal-Mart to pay \$172 million in damages for failing to provide meal breaks to nearly 116,000 hourly workers. Last year in Philadelphia, workers won \$78 million in a lawsuit against Wal-Mart over similar violations.

"This case stands for the proposition that the largest and most profitable retailer in the world has to follow the same laws and honor its contracts just the same as any other business in America," said Sieben.

The United Food and Commercial Workers, which has been trying for years to organize Wal-Mart, lauded Judge King's ruling. In a statement headlined "Wal-Mart—Always, Always The Bottom Line," UFCW Local 789 in South St. Paul called on the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry "to levy to the fullest extent of the law a penalty which would require Wal-Mart to clean up its act and observe all existing state and federal statutes."

Wal-Mart's violation of wage-and-hour laws is part of a pattern that includes union-busting, employment discrimination and child labor infractions, Local 879 said.

"While we are pleased the judge ruled in favor of the workers, we are sure Wal-Mart's behavior will continue until the workers have a voice at work," UCFW said.

"The company's 2006 Annual Report stated that Wal-Mart faced 57 wage-and-hour lawsuits across the United States, including the Minnesota case."

Hidden Camera Crew Trails

'Contracted' Letter Carrier

Union leaders warned management this would happen. If the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) contracted out mail delivery in places like Beaverton, Ore., there would be accountability problems and breaches of mail security, said National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) officers like L.C. Hansen, president of Branch 82 in Portland.

And that's what Hansen found in June when she and a hidden camera crew followed a Beaverton postal service contractor for several days.

Under pressure from the anti-worker GOP Bush government, the Postal Service Board of Governors, named by Bush, has pushed USPS managers to privatize new delivery routes in urban areas, as well as continuing them in rural areas.

Use of the "contractors" to deliver the mail became a key issue in bargaining between the agency and the unions. There were widespread union protests, including one NALC demonstration in high winds and rain in front of USPS headquarters in D.C..

The unions also make the point that the "contractors" couldn't be trusted with the mail the way regular Letter Carriers are trusted.

To prove the case, NALC's national office decided to hire a film crew to document the struggle against postal privatization. Their work will be shown at NALC's July 21-25 convention in Boston. Last year, as part of a union contract settlement, USPS declared a moratorium on further subcontracting, but that expires July 31.

The camera crew first traveled to Miami in late May, where they filmed one side of postal privatization—worker exploitation. They followed a poorly paid Haitian-born legal immigrant as he drove his postal

route, all over town. Hansen said the Beaverton case shows another side of privatization: Waste, inefficiency, and possibly nepotism.

When she got her 4-year contract last year, the Beaverton contractor was the girlfriend of a postal supervisor's son. She is paid \$24,380 a year for what Hansen estimates is just over an hour a day of work.

In preparation for the film crew's arrival, Hansen read the contract's requirements and drove out to look at the contractor's sorting area in the Beaverton post office, and the route itself. The contract requires delivery to 89 addresses in four "cluster boxes" at Arbor Parc—a half-built condo development on which construction had halted after the real estate downturn hit. Arbor Parc is surrounded on all sides by routes delivered by union letter carriers, and Hansen has argued for over a year that it would make a lot more sense just to add Arbor Parc to those routes.

Hansen spent several days looking in on the contractor—whose name is being withheld for privacy reasons—and asking other USPS employees about her work. Hansen discovered some irregularities: A scanner that's supposed to be taken along the route to time-certify package deliveries was instead left in the office; A shop steward told Hansen the contractor scans deliveries before leaving the office, violating USPS's commitment to accurately record time of delivery.

The contractor was supposed to pick up the mail at 10 a.m., but instead arrived at 10:45 a.m.-11:45 a.m. on the days Hansen was waiting. A male companion rode with her while she did her deliveries, and she would stay out what seemed to Hansen like a long time for such a short route. On May 31, Hansen watched her pull up at the post

office, and then drove to Arbor Parc, expecting to watch how she did her work. Hansen says she waited two-and-a-half hours, and the contractor didn't show up.

Letter carriers, including contractors, are supposed to return to the post office at the end of their routes to turn in the key that opens their secure mailboxes, but the Beaverton contractor only infrequently returned the key, Hansen learned. That's a serious violation of postal security.

On June 4, the camera crew waited outside Beaverton's Evergreen post office for the contractor to arrive. Unaware she was being filmed, she picked up the mail and drove with her male companion to a Shari's restaurant in Tanasbourne Mall. They ate pancakes while the mail sat undelivered in her Jeep outside.

Hansen and the camera crew followed her to Arbor Parc. Hansen, wearing a wire, approached her as she placed mail in a cluster box. "My idea was to simply engage her about when the mail came, as if I was a resident," Hansen said. The contractor told Hansen she picks up the mail between 10 and 10:30 and gets to Arbor Parc between 11 and 12. The development is a 5-minute drive from the post office, and it's her only delivery.

Then Hansen identified herself as a union officer. How's the contract going, Hansen asked her. "I think this is a solid deal for me, and for the post office," the contractor replied. Hansen asked her if she'd be willing to be interviewed on film about her job. When she said OK, Hansen waved her arm, and a van-load of people with cameras hopped out.

"At that point, there was like that moment where you know you've been filmed," Hansen recalls. "She wasn't happy about it." The contractor

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Director of Research and Education Grotti Holds Steward Class in Newark, Ohio



International Vice President Walter Thorn and Director of Research and Education Frank Grotti conducted a shop steward training class at the Local 244 Union Hall.



Seen here: Back row: Local 244 President Ed Shields, International Representative Pete Jacks, Executive Officer Donald Seal and Area Director Wesley Royster.

The International Union recently conducted a steward training class in Newark, Ohio. Several Local Unions in Ohio and West Virginia sent 45 representatives to attend the meeting. Participating Local Unions included:

- #152 - Wheeling, WV
- #172 - Zanesville, OH
- #178 - Zanesville, OH
- #191 - Glenford, OH

- #235 - Circleville, OH
- #244 - Newark, OH
- #292 - Zanesville, OH
- #314 - Newark, OH

The seminar, which was held at the Local Union 244 Union Hall in Newark, Ohio, was conducted by Director of Research and Education Frank Grotti, International Vice President

Walter Thorn, Area Director Wesley Royster, Executive Officer Donald Seal and International Representative Pete Jacks.

Some of the topics covered in the training session were: grievance preparation, Weingarten Rights, the Seven Test for Just Cause, discipline, Union's right to information and past practice.



Seen here are attendees from Local Unions in Ohio and West Virginia at the shop steward class on June 21, 2008.





OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

July 2008

Dear GMP Member:

GMP Members have always been full participants in community affairs. We have always known the importance of helping others in need. The United Way has been a key means of fulfilling our commitment to assisting others in difficult economic times, during disasters and throughout family crises

In 2008 with so many of our fellow Americans in desperate straits - mortgage foreclosures, tornado and flood disasters, inflationary gasoline and other costs - we need once again to commit to the United Way.

On behalf of the Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics & Allied Workers International Union, I proudly endorse the 2008 United Way campaign and urge you to support the 2008 United Way campaign. By contributing as generously as you can, you are investing in our community, in our neighbors and in our future.

Sincerely and fraternally,

John P. Ryan
International President

PA Glass Worker's Protective League Meets in Port Allegany

International Vice President Walter Thorn, International Representatives Kim McNeil and Richard Baumcrazt were guest speakers at The Pennsylvania Glass Worker's Protective League, which met in April in Port Allegheny.

The following GMP local unions are affiliate members of the PA Glass Worker's Protective League and sent delegates to the April meeting:

Local 21 - Salem, NJ and Local 28 - Brockway, PA
Local 36 - Lancaster, PA and Local 54 - Port Allegany, PA
Local 75 - Port Allegany, PA and Local 76 - Glenshaw, PA
Local 110 - Brockway, PA and Local 120 - Clarion, PA,
Local 134 - Glenshaw, PA and Local 237 - Hazelton, PA
Local 246 - Clarion, PA and Local 247 - Brookville, PA
Local 273 - Greenville, PA and Local 297 - Clarion, PA
Local 365 - Mahoningtown, PA

There are also United Steelworkers affiliate members in the League.

Topics discussed at the one-day meeting included - the struggles of the economy, foreign imports and the high price of oil. Due to declining membership, the League is looking to expand their affiliates to include other



Seen here at the Spring 2008 meeting of the PA Protective League are (L-R): International Vice President Walter Thorn, International Representative Kim McNeil, Local 54 President Lynn Sorton, Local 54 Financial Secretary Carla Major, Local 247 Recording Secretary Darrell Dickey and International Representative Richard Baumcrazt.

manufacturing-based Locals.

The officers of the PA Protective League are - President Blair Dixon (USW), Financial Secretary Ronald Henderson (USW), Assistant Secretary Christine Henderson (USW) and Vice President Dennis Moses (GMP).

Hidden Camera Crew Trails 'Contracted' Letter Carrier

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left, saying she was going to tell her supervisor about what had happened.

Cameras in tow, Hansen knocked on doors and spoke to Arbor Parc residents. Several told her they thought they weren't getting their mail every day, and that it didn't come at the same time. They hadn't been notified they'd have contracted-out mail delivery service when they bought the condos.

The Postal Service retaliated—against Hansen, the union president.

The next day, when she arrived at the main Portland post office to meet the postmaster, Hansen discovered her electronic access had been cancelled without notice. She waved her postal ID through the card scanner, but the door

wouldn't unlock. For 45 minutes, she tried without success to get a USPS manager to re-activate it.

On mid-morning June 6—two days after the on-camera interview of the "contractor," two armed postal inspectors showed up unannounced at the union hall, instructed to seize Hansen's postal identification. As a union officer, Hansen has a contractual right to access post offices for representational activity. She was floored, and demanded an explanation from management.

Postal Service human resources manager Corrinne Loprinzi told Hansen the badge was taken because Hansen is no longer a USPS employee. Hansen, who'd been on leave the previous six years to work

full-time at the union, had decided to formally retire at the beginning of May after 34 years at USPS, though she plans to serve out the remainder of her term as union president.

But she knows of three other union officials who had done the same thing and USPS extended them the professional courtesy of keeping their postal ID to allow them to access post offices on union business.

It looked like retaliation and the NALC stepped in and threatened to fight the case. Management relented. Hansen got her ID back. Meanwhile, she composed a letter to management detailing her findings about the contractor. And the union's larger battle against privatization continues.

AFL-CIO ENDORSES OBAMA

As expected—it just took time for emotions to cool and to round up the needed votes—the AFL-CIO on the afternoon of June 26 announced it endorsed Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.) for the presidency.

Federation President John J. Sweeney said Obama got the votes of members of the federation's General Board representing unions with more than two-thirds of the AFL-CIO's 9.5 million members. He polled board members by fax and conference call.

"In so many ways—on jobs, health care, gas prices and the war in Iraq—our country is headed in the wrong direction," Sweeney said. "Obama has proven from his days as an organizer, to his time in the Senate and his historic run for the presidency, that he's leading the fight to turn around America."

Sweeney called Obama "a champion for working families who knows what it's going to take to create an economy that works for everyone, not just Big Oil, Big Pharma, insurance companies, giant mortgage lenders, speculators" and the rich.

The endorsement was not unanimous. The Machinists voted "present" and IAM President Thomas Buffenbarger and Transportation Communications Union/IAM President Robert Scardelletti still have questions for Obama. The Machinists and other industrial unions have large segments of blue-collar lower-income male voters who favored Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.) over Obama in the Democratic primaries.

"Blue-collar Democrats are born skeptics," Buffenbarger said. "Their skepticism grew during this campaign. And to turn skeptics into supporters takes more than a perfunctory knock on the door of the House of Labor." Scardelletti and Buffenbarger said "now is not the right time for an endorsement.

"We look forward to a productive conversation with Obama about policies that can resonate with blue-collar Democrats," Buffenbarger added. "As they demonstrated in state after state, blue-collar Democrats respond overwhelmingly to a candidate who will fight to improve their lives. And they are just not there yet. Nor are we."

Even without IAM, major hurdles to

the Obama endorsement were overcome within the prior week when AFSCME, the AFL-CIO's largest union with 1.4 million members, endorsed Obama, followed by the 700,000-member Communications Workers on June 24. AFSCME previously backed Clinton and CWA was neutral. IBEW, the Bakery and Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers (BCTG&M) and the California Nurses Association also issued separate Obama endorsements.

Both the AFL-CIO and the 6-million-member Change to Win back the Illinoisan, the presumed Democratic nominee, against presumed GOP nominee Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.). The unaffiliated National Education Association, the nation's largest individual union, with 3 million members, is expected to endorse Obama at its convention over the Independence Day weekend in Washington.

The AFL-CIO endorsement is significant because it lets member unions—who split their endorsements between Obama, Clinton and former Sen. John Edwards (D-N.C.) before switching to Obama—mobilize their get-out-the-vote and voter information campaigns for Obama. And the AFL-CIO endorsement paves the way for the federations and NEA to coordinate their efforts.

The AFL-CIO said its top-tier states this year will be Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. But its drive will also cover 60 U.S. House races, "every viable Senate race" and 510 races overall in 24 states. The federation aims to put 250,000 volunteers in the field, make 300,000 home visits even before Labor Day, make over 300,000 phone calls and distribute more than 2 million fliers. It already distributed 1.5 million worksite fliers and 500,000 mailers criticizing McCain's economic record.

It also launched a new website, www.meetObama08.com, to go with its "McCain exposed" website.

The federation estimated individual unions will spend approximately \$200 million on politics this year, besides its own \$54 million get-out-the-vote, voter registration, voter protection and non-partisan information campaigns, presenting the positions of Obama and McCain on a wide range of issues of interest to workers.

It will emphasize four issues in its

drive this fall: Universal, affordable, comprehensive health care with government as regulator and backup provider, fair trade not free trade, retirement security, and the Employee Free Choice Act. EFCA will be labor's top priority in the next 111th Congress.

"Leadership can re-engage disenfranchised Americans and bring our country together," the AFL-CIO board's statement said. "Obama has advocated a change of direction for our nation that mirrors the priorities of the labor movement."

The Employee Free Choice Act, which Obama—a former organizer—strongly supports and McCain opposes, would help level the playing field between workers and bosses in organizing campaigns and in bargaining for initial contracts. It would do so by writing "card-check recognition"—automatic recognition of the union when it achieves a majority of signed election authorization cards in a workplace—into law.

It also would increase fines for labor law-breaking, make it easier to get court orders against lawbreakers, and would outlaw "captive audience meetings" where workers must endure anti-union management harangues under pain or discipline and with no rebuttal. The bill passed the Democratic-run House but fell victim to a GOP Senate filibuster. McCain supported the filibuster, while Obama opposed it.

And the legislation mandates that if a newly certified union and management cannot reach a contract within 90-120 days, the contract would go to binding arbitration—ending bosses' right to indefinitely delay contracts, trying to outlast the workers.

Steelworkers President Leo Gerard added another reason to back Obama: His endorsement of union-created plans to revitalize U.S. manufacturing and high-paying jobs. That and "Obama's commitment to make workers the top priority in any trade agreement give our members hope that his election will lead the country in a new direction that's long overdue, and inspire us to work as never before to secure his victory," Gerard said. His union, like IAM, also has many male blue-collar workers.



GENERAL ELECTION

Voter Registration Deadlines

State	Deadline	Phone Number	State	Deadline	Phone Number
Alabama	10/24/08	(334) 242-7210	Montana	10/6/08	(406) 444-2034
Alaska	10/5/08	(907) 465-4611	Nebraska	10/17/08	(402) 471-2555
Arizona	10/6/08	(602) 542-8683	Nevada	10/4/08	(775) 684-5705
Arkansas	10/5/08	(501) 682-1010	New Hampshire	11/4/08 at polls	(603) 271-3242
California	10/20/08	(916) 657-2166	New Jersey	10/14/08	(609) 292-3760
Colorado	10/6/08	(303) 894-2200	New Mexico	10/7/08	(505) 827-3600
Connecticut	11/3/08	(860) 509-6100	New York	10/10/08	(518) 473-5086
Delaware	10/11/08	(302) 739-4277	North Carolina	10/10/08	(919) 733-7173
District of Columbia	10/5/08	(202) 727-2525	North Dakota	Registration not required	(701) 328-4146
Florida	10/6/08	(850) 245-6200	Ohio	10/5/08	(614) 466-2655
Georgia	10/5/08	(404) 656-2871	Oklahoma	10/10/08	(405) 521-2391
Hawaii	10/5/08	(808) 453-8683	Oregon	10/14/08	(503) 986-1518
Idaho	10/10/08	(208) 334-2300	Pennsylvania	10/5/08	(717) 787-5280
Illinois	10/7/08	(217) 782-4141	Rhode Island	10/5/08	(401) 222-2340
Indiana	10/6/08	(317) 232-3939	South Carolina	10/4/08	(803) 734-9060
Iowa	10/25/08	(515) 281-0145	South Dakota	10/20/08	(605) 773-3537
Kansas	10/20/08	(785) 296-4561	Tennessee	10/6/08	(615) 741-7956
Kentucky	10/7/08	(502) 564-3490	Texas	10/6/08	(512) 475-2811
Louisiana	10/5/08	(225) 922-0900	Utah	10/6/08	(801) 538-1041
Maine	11/4/08 at polls	(207) 624-7736	Vermont	10/29/08	(802) 828-2464
Maryland	10/14/08	(410) 269-2840	Virginia	10/6/08	(804) 864-8901
Massachusetts	10/15/08	(617) 727-2828	Washington	10/4/08	(360) 902-4180
Michigan	10/6/08	(517) 322-1460	West Virginia	10/14/08	(304) 558-6000
Minnesota	10/14/08	(651) 215-1440	Wisconsin	10/14/08	(608) 266-8005
Mississippi	10/4/08	(601) 576-2550	Wyoming	10/6/08	(307) 777-7378
Missouri	10/8/08	(573) 751-2301			

Courtesy of the IBEW®

Notice of Nominations and Elections

Local 178, Zanesville, OH

The nomination of officers for Local 178, Zanesville, Ohio, will be held on Tuesday, September 9, 2008, at the regular monthly meeting at 7:00 P.M. at the American Legion, Post 29, 27 S. 3rd Street in Zanesville.

The election of officers for Local 178 will be held at the Spirit Center, beside the plant on Ridge Avenue, from 6:30 A.M. until 4:30 P.M., on Tuesday, October 7, 2008.

Local 50, Seattle, WA

The nomination of officers for Local 50, Seattle, Washington, will be held at the regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, October 8, 2008, at 1:30 P.M., at the UFCW Hall, 1105 Bailey Street in Seattle.

The election of officers for Local 50, will be held at the regular meeting at the UFCW Hall in Seattle, on Wednesday, November 12, 2008, at 1:30 P.M.

Local 87, Seattle, WA

The nomination of officers for Local 87, Seattle, WA, will take place on Thursday, October 9, 2008, at the regularly scheduled union meeting at 12:00 and 2:30 P.M., at the Seattle Eagles Aerie #1 located at 6205 Corson Avenue So.

The election of officers for Local 87 will be held on Thursday, November 13, at the same location from 6:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M.

NOTICE: Any Local Union advertising its nominations and elections in Horizons must submit 120 days prior to the nominations date, an up-to-date corrected mailing list along with other details.

Reflections On Independence Day

Another Independence Day has been celebrated, complete with the now-familiar rituals of parades, speeches, fireworks, speeches, backyard barbecues, and still more speeches—many of them of the wrap-ourselves-in-the-flag variety.

But Independence Day should also be a day when we pause to consider what the colonists fought for from 1775-1784: Freedom and independence, in the full meanings of those words.

Discussing those concepts takes on particular significance this year. A decorated Vietnam veteran, Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and a non-veteran who repeatedly praises the U.S. as the only nation where he could have come so far, Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.), seek the presidency. And baseless rumors are rife in the “blogosphere” questioning Obama’s patriotism, because his father was Kenyan, because he spent part of his youth overseas, or because he does not wear a flag pin.

But what is true patriotism? And what is the independence the colonists fought for in two wars against Britain (in 1775-1783 and 1812-1814). These questions are relevant to workers.

That’s because mindless bombastic my-country-right-or-wrong patriotism often leads to the view that any dissent from the “norm”—such as unionists disagreeing with the consensus concocted by the corporate class and their political puppets—is somehow “unpatriotic.” The flag pin has become a symbol of such mindlessness.



Let’s start with that my-country-right-or-wrong statement. That’s the first version of the quote, from Admiral Stephen Decatur in a toast in 1816: “Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the first. But our country, right or wrong.” Note that even through the jingoism, the key word is “may,” implying that sometimes the nation is wrong and its citizens need to set it right, not to unflinchingly and blindly follow mistaken leaders like sheep.

What Decatur implied, the great Republican liberal statesman Carl Schurz, who fled the failed Austro-Hungarian revolution of 1848 for the freedom of the U.S., made explicit at the anti-imperialism conference in Chicago in 1899: “Our country, right or wrong. When right, to be kept right. When wrong, to be put right.”

That is the spirit of patriotism in which both Obama and McCain speak (and George W. Bush does not). Regardless of whether you agree with their policy positions, both senators see things they believe wrong and want to put them right.

That, we submit, is true patriotism—not the mindless jingoistic flag-wav-

ing of the Radical Right, Karl Rove, Dick Cheney and George W. Bush.

That “put it right” patriotism also underlies the union movement.

Unions exist to help workers put working conditions “right.” We curb the excesses of unrestrained corporate greed and capitalism. We attempt to form what the Declaration of Independence calls “a more perfect union” of people in the U.S., by trying to give all the opportunity to better themselves and to fully participate in society.

And unions provide a key vehicle for legitimate necessary protest and action when there is a “wrong”—be it substandard wages, inhumane working conditions, unsafe jobs or lack of political power vis-à-vis the criminal corporate elite.

Such “put it right” patriotism, by working men and women as well as by Barack Obama and John McCain, is, we submit, the real patriotism. The flag-waving jingoistic, follow-the-leader-blindly “patriotism” too often seen or heard in the bombastic speeches of Independence Day (and other times) is not.

Indeed, the bombast, the blind obedience, the kowtowing to power are found, or forced, in dictatorships and non-democratic regimes. Unions are not present in such nations. True patriotism, as we define it above, is squashed. Think “Burma.”

So as we mark another Independence Day, let us reflect on its true meaning, not just in terms of pride of country, but in terms of pride of what our country is supposed to stand for: Freedom, liberty, independence and, “when wrong, to be put right.”

News from The G.M.P.-Employers Retiree Trust

Changes For Medicare Participants Only

On July 14, 2008, G.M.P. - Employers Retiree Trust (the Trust) began receiving claims electronically from Medicare. Medicare will submit claims to the Trust for all eligible participants.

Although the Trust has always strived to be prompt in

processing claims, accepting claims electronically will improve our efficiency even more.

Please keep in mind, the Trust will need to continue to receive paper claims for our participants who are not yet covered by Medicare.

Local 256, Hamlet, NC Ratifies New Contract

Local Union 256 successfully negotiated a contract with Rexam Closure Systems, Inc. (formerly Owens-Illinois) in Hamlet, North Carolina.

Highlights of the new 3-year agreement, that expires on May 31, 2011 wage increases of 3% in each of the three years.

International Representative Matthew McCarty represented the International Union in the negotiations.

Local 256 members employed at the Rexam facility produce plastic closures.

The officers of GMP Local Union 256 are - President Hortie McLaughlin, Vice President James Standridge, III, Recording Secretary William Trivette and Financial Secretary Vicky Bullard. Local 256 was chartered in 1983.



Seen here are union and company conferees for the new contract with Rexam, Front Row, (L-R): Gary Morgan, HR Operations Manager (Closures), Local 256 VP James Standridge, Local 256 President Hortie McLaughlin, HR Manager Gene Escolas, Local 256 Financial Secretary Vicky Bullard and Plant Manager Michael Wenerd. Back Row: International Representative Matthew McCarty, HR Manager Gary Bowles, Local 256 Recording Secretary William Trivette and Local 256 Chief Shop Steward William Ervin.

Submitting photos to *Horizons*: To achieve the best printed results, the following guidelines should be followed: **Traditional film photography:** 4" x 6" glossy prints on photographic film paper (such as that from your local drug store developer) are preferred. Do not send ink jet, copier, or laser prints. **Digital photography:** A 4.1 megapixel camera or better is recommended. Our printing press requires 300 dpi (dots per inch) for b&w photographs at the final size printed. This means subjects should be photographed using the highest quality JPEG setting on your digital camera (fine). Only JPEG or TIFF formats are acceptable. Images should be unmanipulated; not corrected for size, cropping, color mode, quality of color, or sharpness. Download them from your camera and submit on a CD with a hard-copy print out. Do not e-mail due to large file sizes and the possibility for corruption in transmission.

GMP Visits Local Union 257B at G&W Foundry in Rehoboth, MA

International Representative Hector Sanchez recently met with officers and members of Local 257B as he toured the G&W Foundry facility in Rehoboth, Massachusetts.

G&W Foundry, which started in 1932 as a stove and spare parts foundry, has grown to be one of the industry leaders in domestic and industrial manufacturing.

The officers of Local 257B, Nashua, New Hampshire, are - President Charles Langais, Vice President Brian Allison, Recording Secretary Richard Ledoux and Financial Secretary Eileen Theberge. Local 257B was chartered in 1896.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

The National Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) is the basis on which our Cost of Living clauses are calculated. Thus, changes in the CPI-W are the basis for wage increases as required by many GMP contracts.

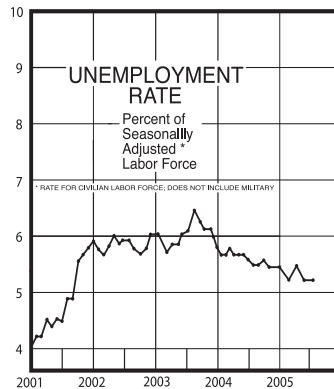
The Bureau of Labor Statistics which publishes the Consumer Price Index has re-formulated the CPI-W, and discontinued the old index in July, 1985 when it published the June, 1985 Index. The new CPI-W reflects a change from home ownership costs to rental equivalent costs.

GMP HORIZONS will continue to publish the CPI-W for the benefit of GMP members.

Although most contracts call for a COL increase based on an increase in points, some have provisions for increases based on percentages. Therefore, both the percentage increase and point increase are shown below.

Effective dates and terms of the contract clauses vary. Consequently, an interested member should consult his current Union Contract for effective dates and provisions. He then can judge from the changes noted in the table if the agreement provisions call for an increase.

For purposes of gauging changes, the base index will remain 1967 = 100.



CONSUMER PRICE INDEX - U.S.A. for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers

	(1967 = 100) Index	Percent Increase	Point Increase
June 2007	607.3	0.1%	0.7
July 2007	606.7	-0.1%	-0.6
August 2007	605.2	-0.2%	-1.5
September 2007	607.3	0.3%	2.1
October 2007	608.6	0.2%	1.3
November 2007	613.2	0.8%	4.6
December 2007	612.9	0.0%	-0.3
January 2008	615.8	0.5%	2.9
February 2008	617.3	0.3%	1.5
March 2008	622.9	0.9%	5.6
April 2008	627.6	0.8%	4.7
May 2008	633.8	1.0%	6.2

12 Month Index Increase = 27.2 • Year-to-Date Inflation Rate Increased by Approximately 1.7%

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX - ALL CANADA

	(1986=100)		(1992=100)	
	2007	2008	2007	2008
January	166.9	171.3	130.3	133.7
February	168.1	171.8	131.2	134.1
March	169.5	172.4	132.2	134.6
April	170.1	173.8	132.8	135.7
May	170.8		133.4	
June	171.3		133.8	
July	171.5		133.9	
August	171.0		133.5	
September	171.3		133.7	
October	170.8		133.4	
November	171.4		133.8	
December	171.7		134.0	
Annual Average				
Average Annual Increase				
March 2007 to March 2008	1.7%		1.7%	
	2007 (1971=100)	2008 (1971=100)	2007 (1981=100)	2008 (1981=100)
January	533.29	536.9	221.2	227.0
February	526.9	538.5	222.8	227.7
March	531.3	540.6	224.6	228.5
April	533.3	544.9	225.5	230.4
May	535.7		226.5	
June	537.3		227.2	
July	537.8		227.3	
August	536.1		226.7	
September	536.9		227.1	
October	535.7		226.5	
November	537.3		227.2	
December	538.1		227.5	

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DEATH BENEFIT DUES - In the event you leave employment seeking permanent and total disability, **YOU MUST CONTINUE PAYING YOUR DEATH BENEFIT DUES** until such time as permanent and total disability status is established. As a general rule, disability determination routinely take from 6 to 8 months.

Any overpayments will be refunded.

Do not permit your **DEATH BENEFIT DUES** to become delinquent over 90 days. All GMP members are responsible for making payments to maintain death benefit eligibility. Persons wishing to report a death or discuss the death benefit may call the Death Benefit Department at 1-610-565-5051 ext. 221. Remember to check your official beneficiary information. The beneficiary of record is solely entitled to the Death Benefit.

Submit beneficiary changes immediately.

All claims must be filed within one (1) year of death.

Early retirees are also responsible for payment up to age 65. If you are self-paying, indicate your local union number and forward your check to:

Bruce Smith
GMP Int'l. Secretary-Treasurer
PO Box 607
608 E. Baltimore Pike
Media, PA 19063

Complacency is Out-of-Date

Here we are in mid-2008 in a recession marked by ever-higher gasoline prices, home foreclosures, increasing inflation and a growing list of natural disasters. Is it time to hunker down and wait for the bad times to blow over?

No way, according to Jim Hightower, the activist and former Texas Secretary of Agriculture, and Susan De Marco, writer and radio talk show host. Hightower has a new book in which he describes numerous individuals who step up and bring about positive social changes.

Hightower, who will speak to GMP delegates at the upcoming Quadrennial Convention, says it all in his book's title, *Swim Against the Current: Even a Dead Fish Can Go with the Flow*.

He tells how community-spirited individuals formed dairy cooperatives, banks committed to neighborhoods and grass roots political efforts.

The commercial enterprises that he highlights actually make money without the negative aspects of corporate culture: cheating suppliers, exploiting workers and bilking the community.

The book is an antidote to complacency and inaction bred of despair that things will never change.

Change, according to the author, results from the desire to improve conditions and the

will and energy to act. For example, Jim Cochran, an organic strawberry farmer, signed a contract with the United Farm Workers Union. "We need to go from saying "I'm doing the best I can to realizing that we should do more," Cochran said.

The book recounts the amazing success of ACORN, the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now. ACORN has fought with others successfully for a higher minimum wage, to oppose unfair utility company practices in Gary, Indiana, to expose unsanitary housing conditions in Toronto and to combat predatory lending by Household Finance Corporation.

The authors outline what they call the politics of fun. They show how a small group of progressives in Wisconsin organized a grassroots political movement that now attracts thousands of people annually.

The outgrowth of this activism is a website called Fighting Bob.com and the People's Legislature, a lobbying effort that brings a progressive agenda to the State House. One of its victories was passage of state ethics reform law.

Hightower and De Marco provide lists of organizations that a reader can contact to join the fight for improving society. Their many accounts of people who have done their part suggests complacency is out-of-date.

"Is it time to hunker down and wait for the bad times to blow over?"

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