



...from the Hall

Issue # 4
July 2004

A newsletter by and for the members of *PACE* Local 8-237
Tacoma, Washington

www.local8-0237.com

The President's Corner — by Chuck Whitt

I AM THE UNION

By now you've heard that Local 8-237 has purchased and will distribute gym bags and backpacks. These bags are embroidered with the PACE logo and the words "I AM THE UNION". The bags were bought as part of a solidarity building program, embroidered with those words to remind everyone who the Union really is – it's you!

2003 was a tough year for our union. Many were not pleased with the results of the labor negotiations, were upset over the increases in medical premiums, the loss of jobs, and saw a continued decline in our relationship with the Company. In short, morale continues to head south. The Company has made it clear they don't care, but many of us in the Union, particularly those of us privileged to serve as officers, are most concerned with this decline.

I AM THE UNION is a phrase I first saw at the PACE Regional Training Conference last year in Anaheim. It was proudly displayed on the shirts of the members of Local 8-608 out of Lewiston, Idaho. They were in negotiations at the time and were actively involved in solidarity building. One of the results of their efforts was to achieve past and future PIUMPF benefit of \$100/month (a goal we aimed for at the last negotiations – as you're aware, we secured for our members a \$100/month PIUMPF pension for their *future* service). Their efforts at solidarity building paid off well for their members.

What I AM THE UNION means is that this local, like all others in PACE, is controlled by the members. As President, I can seek to set a direction for our local, but ultimately, it's the members who come to our meetings that make the decisions on where we will go. We operate the local under Robert's Rules of Order, which, in short, stipulates that the majority rules. If you have a suggestion for actions we should take within this local, then all you need do is bring it up as a motion at the monthly union meeting, get a second, and convince those present to support your notion. We, the officers, are then compelled to carry out that action whether we agree with it or not. You're making the decisions, we're carrying them out. **YOU ARE THE UNION.**

The solidarity building comes from seeing these bags in the mill on a regular basis. You'll see the words I AM THE UNION and (hopefully) be reminded of how we work together to build our collective strength. No, we're not going to always agree, but who out there *always* agrees with anyone? We will work together to achieve the best that we can from this Company, and from ourselves. It's our moral imperative, particularly in these times where things don't seem to be going our way – that is when we need to be united the most.



As many of you may have heard by now, I have been asked by the International to help in the Rapid Response training of locals within the region. I just returned from International headquarters in Nashville after being trained myself. Beginning July 12th, I will take a leave from the mill until Labor Day to train locals in Region 11. Al Estrada from local 8-675 in Los Angeles, California was also asked to assist. Together we will help International Representatives and Regional Rapid Response Coordinators Al Lippincott and Rick Latham get all the locals in our region trained.

Though I wrote about Rapid Response in the in the last newsletter, let me recap and update that information.

Rapid Response (RR) is a joint program with the Steelworkers (USWA) and PACE that seeks to have an impact in the national legislative arena. It was reinforced over and over again in our training that RR is a **non-partisan** program for dealing with issues that affect us in our workplaces. Currently, Rapid Response is seeking to roll back President Bush's efforts at eliminating and restricting overtime; to enact a law to assist in organizing unions (Employee Fair Choice Act – EFCA); substitute *free-trade* with *fair-trade* agreements; and to stem the rapid rise in health care costs.

Certainly you recognize the importance of that last point. As you read this, your contribution to our health insurance has increased almost two-fold to over \$160.00 per month. But you may well ask why we should be concerned about the other points. The overtime issue is one, as written, that excludes collective

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Vice Presidents Corner

— by Bob Jones

Vice-President's Corner

In this past year we all have heard a great deal about counseling. In this article I would like to give a definition from my perspective on counseling. Hopefully we can all gain a better understanding of what counseling is.

By definition, what is counseling? Counseling is a sequence of steps that enables an individual to sort out events or consequences of actions, and reach a decision that would have positive impact on their lives. Often counseling is sought out in times of crisis, or a shifting in direction of an individual's life. Counseling consists of talking with an individual in a way that will help that individual solve a problem. Counseling will help an individual to create conditions which will cause that individual to understand and/or improve their behavior, character, values or life circumstances. Counseling is often performed face to face, in a comfortable setting. Trust is paramount. All information should be held confidential between counselor and client, unless there is evidence that the client may harm himself or others. For example, in the State of Washington, licensed counselors are required by law to report cases of child abuse or elder abuse. Counseling can, and is often done in other formats such as by telephone, in writing, or even via the Internet such as e-mail or video conferencing. However, to be most effective counseling is better performed face to face. Relationship counseling is not about giving advice or recommendation. It is about helping and supporting an individual to find an understanding and answers that work best for him/her. Counseling is about being supportive, friendly, and having a positive approach to personal development.

First and foremost anyone who is considering counseling another individual needs to examine their own motivation regardless of who they are. Are their intentions to help that individual recognize a behavior that may need adjustment and then work with them to see a positive outcome? Wrong motivations can create problems for the individual counseled and will not produce the desired results.

In counseling one of the most important aspects is follow through. Follow through includes being consistent. For example, one would meet with the individual and re-visit the issue to determine what progress has taken place and any challenges or additional questions the counselee may have. Follow through is positive guiding and monitoring an individual through Steps A, B, C, and so on until the issue is resolved. Giving an individual positive feedback and

validating their improving behavior will greatly enhance the individual's desire to work that much harder to see the issue completely resolved.

Many individuals seeking counseling have problems with past experiences in their lives, which they find difficult to overcome. These experiences and problems prohibit him/her from moving forward in their lives. Without help, these experiences can become roadblocks and stumbling blocks. Counseling helps the individual face the effects of past experiences, so the stumbling blocks can become stepping stones. Counseling takes time, and depending on the issue, can take anywhere from a couple of sessions to several months to see the issue or issues resolved.

Often times a person in crisis will not seek help because they feel no one will understand, or that they will be judged, or they are just embarrassed about seeking help. A counselor's job is to be your advocate and to assist you throughout your journey toward personal development. They are trained to be good listeners and to be objective. If you are facing a crisis in your life or a season of change, then possibly counseling can help you understand the why, and do something about it.

Simpson offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP can offer referrals to help you find a licensed counselor. To reach the EAP call Jenny in Human Resources at Ext. 255.

Bob Jones

Grievances

Two 4th Steps
Four 3rd steps
One-second step
One pending

Standing Committee is presently in discussions with the Company regarding moving the Recaust and Kiln departments to a one man department rather than two.

The Company has proposed a Washer floor down sizing: Manning 4 washer line with 4 operators, and using bleach plant assistant to assist when needed. Discussion have just started and will be on-going.

Bob Jones



(Continued from page 1)

bargaining agreements from the restrictions on overtime. Yet if the issue is put in place as the Bush administration intends on August 23rd of this year, our chances of retaining overtime in our next negotiations will invariably be diminished. Like it or not, we have to compete with other non-union entities out there every time we go to the table. If no one else is paying OT, why would this company want to? It's for that same reason that we need to insure that the right to form a union is not abridged and that our jobs are not *outsourced* through so called fair-trade agreements (imagine having to compete with wages of 45 cents an hour).

These are issues that every man and woman in our mill, in our movement should be concerned about. These are the issues that Rapid Response will address.

Rapid Response is originally a Steelworkers program, in place within their union since 1995. PACE has formed a strategic alliance (www.pacesteelalliance.org) with the Steelworkers to utilize the hundreds of thousands of members in our combined unions to fight for our survival. It has worked very well for the Steelworkers (they convinced a Republican president to support steel tariffs in 2001 – an amazing feat!) and the goal is to make it as equally effective for PACE. (Imagine if we had had a program such as this in place when we fought the environmental issues of the last administration.)

It works like this: The RR offices in Pittsburgh and Nashville will send out Information Alerts to every Local Coordinator (Paul Iha will be our coordinator). The Local Coordinator will then distribute the Information Alert to the Team Members (I will be asking our shop stewards to assume that role for now). The Team Members will then distribute the information alerts to our members so that they can be better informed on what's going on in D.C. On occasion, Action Alerts will be distributed in the same manner. These will ask members to write, phone, or fax our representatives to ask them to oppose or support such action. You will be asked to jot a short note on the subject which will then be forwarded to D.C. (It's well understood that if a Representative or Senator receives 5 notes on an issue in a day that this is a big deal. If they receive 25 notes in a day, it's a cause for concern. If they receive 500 notes in a day, it's a crisis.)

We the people, will once again gain control over our government.

Finally, following Action Alerts, Follow-ups will be distributed through this mechanism to let us know what our action achieved. It's a process that has worked well for the Steelworkers.

We'll only deal with issues that have impact on our locals. We will not be dealing with issues such as abortion, religion, gay rights, gun control, or any other wedge issues. As emphasized over and over again, it will be purely non-partisan, dealing only with issues that directly impact our unions.

Another aspect of my duties will be a voter registration drive. We are not going to be asking if you're registered to vote or not, we're going to ask **everyone** to register (or re-register) in this drive. We will not be telling you how to vote during this drive either, it's merely to get as many PACE and Steelworkers registered as is possible. Our strength in the legislative arena is derived from the ability to hold a politician accountable. The best way to do that is through the ballot box, and you have to be registered to go there.

In conjunction with this registration effort, the Steelworkers and PACE will **each** be giving away a new Harley-Davidson motorcycle (made by PACE members, in case you didn't know). Registered voters will be eligible to win. Look for more details on that in the near future.

Finally, the International may ask me, and has trained me, to participate in more partisan activities after the RR network is put in place. It should come as no surprise that our International is going to work to get John Kerry elected. I believe it is the right thing to do and will support this effort if called.

Looking at it from a strictly union perspective, you should clearly understand that there is no other choice for this union. President Bush has openly put unions in his crosshairs. Another term for this president may well spell the demise of our rights to bargain collectively. He will be a lame-duck president who cannot be held accountable by another election. The International believes, as I do, that he will come out, no-holds barred, to put each and everyone of us at the mercy of our companies. Look around at how our company treats their non-union employees and you should understand why that would not be a desirable outcome. Our International recognizes this and will fight for our rights accordingly. I sincerely hope you will join us in the defense of those rights.

Chuck Whitt

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FOR QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, OR
"LETTERS TO THE EDITOR", WRITE CHUCK
WHITT AT CLWHITT@MINDSPRING.COM.
SPACE PERMITTING, I WILL PUBLISH JUST
ABOUT ANYTHING.

◀.....▶



Reality Check: 'I Approve This Message'

May 5, 2004 4:36 pm US/Central

It is so slap-your-forehead-obvious that many voters wonder why it's there at all. Candidates pay millions for their political ads, then tell us in a few seconds what most of us already know...that they "approve" the message.

But IN FACT, it's the law. The new McCain-Feingold campaign law requires candidates to take responsibility for their ads. It makes them say it out loud, and show their faces.

It is supposed to cut down on the number of nasty campaign commercials.

But that's QUESTIONABLE. There are more negative ads than ever before.

And that's NOT THE WHOLE STORY.

Some of the most negative ads are coming from special interest groups not affiliated with any campaigns. And those ads are not required to reveal who made them.

Meanwhile, the words "approve this ad" are some of this year's campaign buzz phrases, like "WMD's" and "outsourcing."

From WCCO—TV, Minneapolis (www.wcco.com)

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