



...from the Hall

Issue # 3
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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

It's 7:30 AM and I sit here alone in the Galleria Room at the Portland Hilton hotel. The meeting for this second day of the PACE Region XI Council doesn't begin for another hour. So in the interim I go over my notes of the previous day's meeting.

The previous day's meeting began with the usual Pledge of Allegiance, the Invocation, the roll call, etc. Afterward we turned to the training portion of the Council's business. Up first were Al Lippincott and Rick Latham, Region XI International Representatives and Regional Coordinators, to present to the members present an explanation of the PACE Rapid Response program. They went on to describe the Rapid Response program (see page 3) and explained to us why this program is critical to our future.

While their presentation was compelling, it really hit home this morning after reading the newspaper and putting the front page article in perspective to the handouts we received the previous day.

On the front page of the newspaper was an article titled "Four cases show downsized dreams." It described the events that four Tacoma area residents experienced after being laid off from their well paying jobs. The gist of the article was that these neighbors of ours went from jobs paying twenty plus dollars an hour to jobs that were paying less than ten dollars an hour.

In Al and Rick's Rapid Response presentation, they handed out a flyer of Department of Labor statistics that showed that we are losing jobs in our state that pay on average \$52,531.00 a year and replacing them with jobs that pay only \$36,838.00 per year, about 30% and \$16,000 a year less. Could you bear a pay cut like that?

We've all heard and read about the exodus of high paying manufacturing jobs to countries that pay far less for their labor; who have none of the expensive environmental regulations that burden our industries; and whose governments allow their workers to be subjugated by the manufacturing companies they work for. And here in the Good ol' United States, we're replacing those manufacturing jobs with service sector (burger flipping) jobs.

Rapid Response, as described to us, is to be a tool for us to use to try and stem the loss of those (our) manufacturing jobs. Because even if our jobs are not directly moving overseas, you can bet that the economic pressure of that off shore manufacturing has a direct effect on our employment (crew reductions).

By now we've all heard of NAFTA (signed into law by Clinton) and witnessed the "great sucking sound" it makes as our jobs leave the country. Maybe you've also heard of the WTO (World Trade Organization), FTAA (Free Trade of the Americas Act), CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement) and Fast Track authority. These are all legislative acts and bodies that promise to accelerate the outsourcing and downsizing of the American work force. These are all acts of "free trade" being espoused by the current administration and their allies in Congress. These are all acts that promise to enrich the few at the expense of the many (us). And sadly enough, there are too many of us who are more than ready to help these politicians destroy the futures of us and our families.

One of my friends is a gun nut (I say that affectionately, with no malice at all), an NRA member, and a staunch Republican voter solely because of the party's support for gun rights. Oddly enough, he recently related to me that he was selling some of his guns off because of his personal financial situation. So while he's a single issue voter trying to save his guns by voting Republican, he is in fact losing his guns through economic attrition. Yeah the right to own guns will still be there, but as we lose our jobs and see drastic cuts in pay, we won't be able to afford them.

This is not meant to say you should vote Democrat (remember, Clinton signed NAFTA and his Democratic cronies cause enough trouble with their environmental policies), but is more a plea to vote intelligently, to look beyond just the one distracting single issue. Voting should not be about just selecting D's or R's, but selecting the candidates that are going to make our lives better (or at least no worse). It's about protecting our economic viability and stopping this "free trade" race to the bottom.

We're still the majority in this country. If we can avoid the distractions many are easily led to, we can

(Continued on page 3)



Vice Presidents Corner

— by Bob Jones

Most of us have heard conflicting information regarding PIUMPF-- In particular, whether our pension will have money left in the retirement program when we retire.

The following information was gathered from PACE Regional XI Council meeting:

Out of top 1.000 pension plans PIUMPF ranks in the top 494.

PIUMPF has:

- 1.6 Billion dollars
- 40 years in existence
- 72,000 participants
- 8.5 million dollars going out to pensioners
- 23,000 retirees
- Fifty seven million dollars investment income per month. (That's 17.3/4% return on investment.)
- 300.000 contributing employees
- Forty eight million dollars income from contributing employees
- Average age of workers is 45
- Average retirement age is 70.8

Hopefully this will satisfy questions some of you may have.

Another area I needed understanding of was the Rapid Response Program.

It's a grass roots rapid response communication, edu-



cational, and action program that evolves every PACE member.

Broken down into sections, this means:

Communication: Instant communication with every PACE member.

Education: Provides necessary structure to inform every PACE member regarding pending legislation concerning labor and worker related issues.

Action: Provides the necessary structure to activate the PACE membership, to provide for real change in our ability to influence the political process.

Change: Provides tools to generate necessary change

Opportunity: Provides the opportunity for every PACE member to have a strong voice and an active part in the political and legislative activities that affect their daily lives.

Grievances

- Two grievances of a warning letter in file, employee wants it removed.
- Two grievances for lost overtime opportunity
- Four grievances of Supervisor doing hourly work.
- 3-Day suspension after thirty days off on medical.
- 4th step grievance, extra board employee called in place of senior permanent employee.
- Wage adjustment for Waste Treatment.

There is on-going communication with Simpson regarding the Caustic/Kiln upgrade. Beginning this month, we'll have talks with the Company regarding two other jobs that rumor says are slated for elimination, Washer Floor Assistant, and Pulp Machine Grader.

If you have any thoughts, or comments you can contact me at the following; extension 449, or call me on my cell phone.

Bob Jones
Vice President
Local 8-237

The Buzz

— Rumor control and other talk around the Mill

The Buzz has been that summer vacations for the Extra Board and the Recaust department would not be allowed this year.

The Truth is that the bottom 25% of the Extra Board will not be allowed to sign up for summer vacations during the seniority signup period. The Company has assured us that if there are weeks available, all members of the extra board will allowed to signup for those weeks.

The Rumor about the Recaust department just wasn't true. Relief's are tight there, but Diane is trying to get everyone their vacation.

There are some vacation issues with the Oilers too.

(Continued on page 4)



(Continued from page 1)

regain control of this country and our futures. It's not just about guns, or just about the environment, rather the choices we make are about our future and the future of our families.

Get involved. Get registered to vote. Get past the political rhetoric and let's take this country back. Remember, the world is run by those who show up.

I'll see you there.

PACE Region XI Council Report

PACE held its regional council meeting in Portland, Oregon, on May 20th - 22nd. The regional council consists of the PACE local unions in the western United States; Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, California, Alaska and Hawaii. Vice President Bob Jones and myself attended to represent Local 8-237.

The Council meets yearly to train members on contemporary issues and to give reports on the issues that have affected their mills and plants in the previous year. The training this year was on the PACE *Rapid Response* program as well as the National Paper Bargaining Council.

Vice President Bob Jones has already given a brief description of *Rapid Response*, so I'll only add a few more comments to compliment his report.

As Bob noted, *Rapid Response* is a grassroots plan in the International Union to coordinate and disseminate information on the local level from the legislative arena that has a direct effect upon our fellow workers or us. *Rapid Response* is a strategic alliance between the United Steel Workers of America (USWA) and PACE that will use their greater numbers to achieve a greater impact on Capital Hill in Washington, D.C.

In a capsule, *Rapid Response* will identify non-partisan, issue oriented legislative issues on the national level; disseminate that information to the locals via *Information Alerts*; seek help from members in the form of *Action Alerts* (cards, letters and phone calls); and keep the members informed of what their actions achieved with their respective congressional representatives by issuing *Feedback Reports*. *Rapid Response* is meant to use our numbers to the betterment of our members. We have strength in our numbers, *RR* gives us the tool to exercise that strength.

Local 8-237 will conduct a *RR* training class sometime

this summer, coincident with our Shop Steward training. Rose Florio has volunteered to be our *RR* coordinator, and our Shop Stewards will serve as team members. You'll be hearing more about *Rapid Response* as time goes by, and I'm sure you'll like what you see.

The other big training class at the regional council was on the new National Paper Bargaining Council. The NPB Council was formed at convention in Las Vegas earlier this year. It seeks through its membership to increase the bargaining power of the paper products industries of PACE.

The years have seen an erosion of our bargaining power as the increasingly consolidated ownership in the paper industry sets the bar lower and lower with each negotiation. These companies have learned all too well how to coordinate their bargaining by picking on the weaker locals within our International and coming to mediocre terms in settlements. These settlements are then used as industry standards to drive the subsequent negotiations so that it becomes nearly impossible to make a stand. Strikes are negated as these companies play one mill against the other, shifting their production lines between mills so as to assure the prospect of a long strike, should a local make that choice.

The NPB Council was formulated to set a minimum standard for contracts. In this way, a smaller mill will not be allowed to present a contract that could have negative impacts upon the rest of us. The standards will be set at conventions, such as the one recently held in Las Vegas, and approved by a 75% majority of the local unions. The International President will then have the authority to forbid a vote on a sub-par contract, thereby keeping an individual local from setting the standards for the rest of us. It's important to understand that we set the standards through a super-majority vote, not the President. His only job will be enforcing the minimums we determine.

The current proposed standards are:

- No contracts longer than four years
- No waiving the right to bargain over benefits (some misguided locals have voted to let their companies set the terms of their medical benefits)

The proposal is to start bargaining under the NPB agenda in the year 2005 (provided it's approved by the locals). With that start date in mind, our contract negotiations will begin in 2009, deep in the heart of what promises to be strong and compelling, coordinated bargaining.

The NPB Council is still in the formation stage, seeking 75% approval at each individual local throughout the

(Continued on page 4)



(Continued from page 3)

country. The voting must be complete by July 2004 to comply with the rules of the Convention. Our Local will be voting, by secret ballot, at the June 14th regular meeting. Show up and cast your ballot for a brighter future.

PACE, the future is in your hands.

— Chuck Whitt

**Remember, per our bylaws
There will only be one union meeting
per month for the months of June,
July, and August. The sole meeting
will be the first meeting, held on the
second Monday of the month.**

(Continued from page 2)

There are eight Oilers in the vacation pool, each with 6 weeks of vacation. The Company has set a quota of one vacation per week. With only 48 weeks available in the year (you lose 4 for the shutdown), it becomes nearly impossible to cover all 48 vacations the Oilers have. The Company has been reminded of their obligation under 21.48 to make the weeks available. There are talks still going on.

One thing all of us need to do during this period is to keep track of our vacation requests. Know when you submitted a vacation, and keep track of the denial when it happens. Contact the Standing Committee if you know that you were denied a vacation when there was coverage available. Save all the paperwork associated with that denial. We may need it.

May 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10 Union mtg	11	12	13	14 Payday	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24 Union mtg	25	26	27	28 Payday	29
30	31					

June 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 Payday	12
13	14 Union mtg.	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 Payday	26
27	28	29	30			