

THE BULLETIN BOARD

L E T T E R

April 2008

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

Donald J. Hoak, Business Manager/Financial Secretary

Free Trade

NAFTA, CAFTA, SHAFTA. What does it take for politicians and the public to understand that free trade means

THE BULLETIN BOARD

INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD OF
ELECTRICAL WORKERS

Main Office

408 Broad Street
Johnstown, PA 15906
814-535-7655
800-850-3088

814-535-7657 FAX

Erie Office

814-825-1781

"<http://www.ibew459.org/>"

Donald J. Hoak, Business
Manager/Financial Secretary

Kenneth L. Richards,
President/Assistant Business
Manager/Editor

Tony Henry, Vice President

Gregory W. Wolf, Assistant
Business Manager

Mary M. Perdew, Recording
Secretary

Kevin N. Poling, Treasurer

the elimination of American work in favor of cheap foreign labor? Trade has been around since nations came into existence; it's not a new concept. The new spin on it is moving production around to the cheapest labor in the world in order for multinational corporations to make the largest profits in human history at the expense of those that do the work.

We all see this. I think the problem lies with us not being heard in Washington, D.C. Actually, I think we are heard in Washington on the subject and I think we are being ignored. Do we have anybody in Washington in the House or Senate that is not a multi-millionaire? Do we really think they relate to what goes on with the common working man and woman in the United States? Their low side threshold for what they think is the middle class is above what most people make all around us. They live with a beltway mentality and don't see any further than the exit ramp on the six lane. They talk about retraining people like it really happens. They don't seem to grasp that the retraining taking place is a certified welder learning to make coffee at McDonalds and now

working for one-third of what he was making last month. Don't buy the training rhetoric. It's less than a lot of B.S.

While they vote on fast track authority to give our good jobs away as rapidly as they can and before we have time to react, we ask ourselves, "why would they do this?"

Are they so blind that they think we will just find another good paying job tomorrow? Perhaps we need to try to imagine how they see things from the Capitol. Let's say I'm a multi-millionaire Senator. An opportunity for a free trade agreement comes along. I say, "trade is important in the global economy; we need to have trade." Now I know that many Americans are going to lose good paying jobs but I say to myself, "the multinational corporation will give me huge campaign contributions if I vote in favor of this deal." I know many of my constituents will lose good paying jobs and be angry but I can run commercials at election time and tell them how retraining will bring them back into the middle class. I can run these commercials
(Continued on Page 2)

Free Trade

(Continued from Page 1)

and many other self-supporting commercials with the money I get from the campaign contributions of the corporations that I just voted a tax incentive to move work offshore. Pretty soon, I will actually believe the B.S. that I propagate on trade and training, and I will become a master on the subject. I can stay elected every term because I have so much money I can run commercials every two hours telling the average voter how much I have done for them. After awhile in Washington, I will have become so good at staying elected that it will be the only thing I focus on; it will be my sole purpose. I can ignore my constituents, take lobbyist money for an exotic trip, take corporate money for reelection, stay in office for a long time, and feel and act like a king. When I appear on television, I will put on makeup and lipstick and look and act like a celebrity. I will not answer direct questions because I don't have to. I'm above accountability. I'm a politician. I'm not a servant of the people; I serve myself at their expense.

It really is time for real change. That message is the most important one we will ever hear and the time is now or never. The youth in this country see it very clearly right now. I think it is because they see that the politics of the past have left them with no jobs or future to look forward to and they are demanding more of America. I salute their courage and am in full support of it. WE allowed this to occur to ourselves and we must initiate the change in the old politics as usual in this election cycle.

NAFTA, CAFTA, SHAFTA, deregulation, unfettered capitalism, corporate dominance of our lives, rich corporate politicians bought and paid for, broken middle class, 47 million without health care, rampant increases in gas, oil, natural gas and electric rates.

It is time to take back America and that won't be done with politics as usual. It is time for real change and new faces in Washington. It is time to move forward and let the American people have a voice in their government. We the people, not we the elite politicians. Let's see what the politicians look like in the unemployment line without their makeup and lipstick. Perhaps some training will be in order for them, like how to put cheese on a cheeseburger for minimum wage while trying to feed a family of four. The rich have had their way for thirty years of corporate run government. It's time for people run government, government run by those that do what's right for workers for a CHANGE.

Summer Safety

Kenneth L. Richards,
President/Assistant Business
Manager/Editor

Here it is the middle of April. I guess you could say the groundhog was just about right on. If you are like me, you are anxiously awaiting warm weather to get out to ride your motorcycle or play golf. Something to always keep in mind while doing the things you enjoy is the safety of you and your family this summer.

I keep reflecting back on the fatality that occurred recently on the Met-Ed property and a serious

contact a fellow lineman encountered in Ohio. Going around to the District Meetings, I hear horror stories of what I would call near misses. Whether you are at work, at home, or on vacation, you have to keep your mind on things that surround you.

If at any time you are at work and you have a question about a safe condition, stop immediately. Ask questions. Never proceed without being certain the conditions are perfectly clear. It is your right not to proceed forward without knowing that the work you are about to perform is at the safest condition possible. There are a lot of things that distract us from doing our daily duties, from what the boss may have said to what is happening with our employer. Everyone wants to return home from work the same way they went to work.

Safety is an important part of our time at home also, whether it is mowing the lawn, playing golf or being with the family at the beach. Always keep in mind that there could be an unsafe condition surrounding us somewhere.

The IBEW and Local 459 endorse safety to the highest priority. Keep safe and have an enjoyable summer.

The Times "They Are A Changing"

Gregory W. Wolf, Assistant Business
Manager, Local 459 - Erie

I am taking time to write about exercise. If you know me, that would be a challenge. I am the first, maybe the second, to admit my disdain for unneeded physical activity in my later years. No, I am not talking about the physical kind (Continued on Page 3)

of exercise; I am addressing the exercise of your rights as free citizens of this country. The election process started early and some people think it may never end. I know you will be pummeled in the coming months from every media that you can imagine, but I do think you need to develop patience and think how important your decision will be.

At some point we will know who warrants the support of Organized Labor and I am sure the Local will do everything in their power to assist, but it will take all of the membership and all of their relatives and friends voting in support of working families to put Labor back to its rightful position in Washington. In case you forgot or in some cases never knew, the only agent for working families is Organized Labor. If the truth is known, we in Organized Labor have not had the conversations that needed to take place for an unforgiving long period of time; we in Organized Labor have not had our issues examined from our perspective for an unforgiving long period of time; and we in Organized Labor have seen our rights and the rights of the membership solely neglected and, to some degree, nullified for an unforgiving long period of time.

We can all complain that things are not right, things are not the way they should be or they aren't the way they used to be but this year we can and, with your help, we will endeavor to make them right. We need to elect people that not only understand the needs of working families, but will fight for legislation

and governmental appointments to support those needs. If you have any interest in being part of the solution, answer the call to volunteer your time and energy to the process.

Stay United

Tony Henry, Vice President/Business Rep.

I recently had the opportunity to attend the 38th Bi-annual Constitutional Convention of the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO. During the convention, there were many speakers such as Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, Robert Casey, and Union Leaders William George and Richard Trumpka. Although these people may have slightly different views on some subjects, the one view no one saw differently was the fact that no matter who gets nominated in November, we must stand behind that candidate. Whether it is Clinton or Obama should not matter after November.

It's time for a change in the White House and with either candidate, we will see the change that labor unions all across the United States need. We need a president who will look out for the middle class and not give tax breaks to the filthy rich or sign trade agreements that will take more jobs out of the United States. We need a president that will pay attention to the economy and not let the oil companies take advantage of the American people. We, as middle class union members, cannot afford another four years of a president that only cares about his rich friends getting richer. So remember Brothers and Sisters, united we stand, divided we beg.

United We Stand

Jay S. Schlegel, III
Business Representative

Recent events have given these words more meaning for many of us. If we stand firm in our convictions and speak with one voice, history can be made. This November, we have a chance to make a difference for all working families in this country. For far too long, our voices have fallen on deaf ears. We have already told our friends in Washington that the status quo is no longer acceptable. Next, we must elect a friend of labor to the Presidency. The two Democratic candidates have already pledged to sign legislation allowing working men and women the right to organize and join a union. In today's workplace, employers use threats, lies and intimidation to dissuade their employees from voting to organize. Sadly, the United States is one of the few countries in the free world that does not have some type of law protecting workers from these unfair tactics. If we lose this fight, our children and grandchildren will never have the rights and protections we enjoy that were won by those who came before us.

Today, unemployment is rising almost as fast as the price of oil, and billions of taxpayers' dollars have been handed over to Wall Street while the men and women of Main Street have been left to fend for themselves. Who among us doesn't know someone without health insurance or a relative who is struggling to pay their heating or electric bills? It is our collective responsibility to change the system. Together we can make a difference. Don't be distracted by issues having nothing to do with the future of our
(Continued on Page 4)

next generation of labor. Exercise your right to vote this November and between now and then, do what you can to support and elect labor friendly candidates at all levels of government. There will be opportunities to help whether through participation in a phone bank, a block walk or through donations to the C.O.P.E. Fund.

Remember, together we stand but divided we will beg. If we work hard for the candidates that support our issues, history can and will be made!

Safety, Safety, Safety

Kevin P. Carroll, Business Rep. - Erie

What is it that your family and friends most want from you? Well, let me tell you. They want you to come home from work safe and sound. There are no good short cuts when you are at work. Our jobs can be extremely hazardous and, in some cases, deadly. This isn't just for Linemen. It's for power plant workers on the coal pile, in the Operation Group checking high pressure steam valves, the E&I Group working on large motors and doing calibrations next to the boilers, the Lab Technicians working with chemicals, and the Maintenance gang working on mills. Our Local Union isn't just about utility work. We have municipality workers working on sewer lines and water lines, the Streets Department, sewage treatment, water treatment and police officers all performing tasks that are or could be fatal if you don't concentrate on what you are doing.

Let's not stop there. Our

Union is very diversified. On any given day, we have members driving company vehicles in Pennsylvania, New York and Maryland reading or installing meters and delivering material but most importantly, doing it safely. Let's face it folks. If it is done safely, no one has a complaint. If you get hurt, you will never hear the end of it.

Workers Memorial Day

Kenneth L. Richards, President/
Assistant Business Manager/Editor

With Workers Memorial Day approaching, I want to share with you the list of people from Local 459 who have died on the job. Keep our Brothers and Sisters in mind on April 28th. Mourn for the dead and fight like hell for the living.

Irwin S. Berkibile
Paul E. Bitters
Mack G. Black
John W. Fisher
James M. Heinzer
William K. Henderson
Robert Hopkins
Howard W. Kifer
Linda K. Kunkle
Donald L. McCall
Robert L. McClain
Larry R. McWilliams
George W. Mead
James Oakes
Harold W. Port
John N. Rabits
Kenneth C. Rhine
Jacob D. Riggs
Robert C. Rupert
James L. Scholton
John W. Shearman
Paul D. Stucke
Robert E. Tabler
Walter E. Thomas
Richard T. Wile
Richard J. Woodrow

Reasons to Belong to a Union

As long as there is organized capital, there will be organized labor. And, that is as it should be in a democratic society.

The true union member wants to help and not hinder his employer. He realizes that the more successful the business is, the more successful the employee will be...if he receives fair value for his labor and a fair share of the profits he has helped produce.

A working man's life is valuable. Every time the clock ticks, there goes a second off that life. When he sells the hours of his life to make a profit for someone else, he is entitled to all he can get for these precious hours.

Workers try to get as much as possible for the hours of their lives that they sell to their employers. By himself, this is difficult. He can be broken like a stick. But breaking a bundle of sticks is not so easy.

That is why working people organize unions: to help in getting a share of the profits they bring into a successful business. Unionism has brought about, in addition to reasonable pay, better working conditions, more job security, and more leisure time for workers to enjoy vacation and pension benefits.

It is an ignorant man who values his life cheaply, sells it cheaply and works hours to make his employer richer, to the extent he keeps himself poor.

Well- paid organized labor is a good thing for any town. The more a worker earns, the more he spends. And the more he spends, the better it is for the merchant, the farmer, and everyone else.

WHO RUNS THE UNION?

... **YOU** **DO!**

YOU elect your own local union officers.

YOU run your own local union affairs.

YOU have your own negotiating committee.

YOU make the decisions on your own union contract.

YOU have your own shop stewards.

YOU decide important policies and actions of your own union by majority vote.

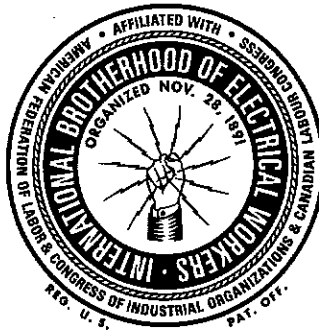
YOU elect your international union officers.

YOU elect your own delegates to the international conventions.

YOU —the membership—are the final voice of authority and decision in your Union.

Our union exists for one and only one major reason—the good of our members. Our union, the IBEW, accomplishes as a unit what we cannot accomplish as individuals.

**International Brotherhood
of Electrical Workers
AFL-CIO
Local Union 459
408 Broad Street
Johnstown, PA 15906
TIME VALUE**



Non Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
JOHNSTOWN, PA
PERMIT NO. 347

TIME VALUE

Return Service Requested

**The Bulletin Board is the official
Publication of IBEW Local 459
408 Broad Street
Johnstown, Pennsylvania 15906**

Business Manager/Fin.Sec.....Donald J. Hoak
Assistant Business ManagerGregory W. Wolf
President/Assistant Business
Manager/Editor Kenneth L. Richards
Secretaries.....Judith A. Roberts
Marjorie L. Zimmerman
Amanda B. Gambotto



THE BULLETIN BOARD

Business Representatives

Robert L. Ashbaugh
Kevin P. Carroll
Tony Henry
Jay S. Schlegel, III

Executive Board Members

Robert L. Ashbaugh (Chairman) Donald (Mark) Hull
Kevin P. Carroll Ronald D. Itell (Secretary)
Timothy J. Dougherty Joseph L. Oliver
Patrick J. Eddy Jay S. Schlegel III

ATTEND YOUR MONTHLY UNION MEETINGS

1ST Thursday

4:00 PM Executive Board

2ND Monday

7:00 PM Northwest District
(Erie/ Warren)

2ND Wednesday

7:00 PM Central District
(Clearfield)

2ND Thursday

7:00 PM Northeast District
(Towanda)

3RD Thursday

7:00 PM Southwest District
(Johnstown)

DON'T LOSE

YOUR VOICE



**ATTEND YOUR
UNION MEETINGS**