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EVERGREEN LEADER

The Voice of I.A.M. & A.W. District 160 in Western Washington and Alaska

Vol. No. 63 September 2024

Directing Business Representative's Report

Fall Political Campaigns Now Include Important Labor Issues

Wishing all our Members and their families a happy and safe Labor Day. As we honor the achievements of workers who, through Unity and Solidarity, paved the way for future generations, we find ourselves once again in a season of political campaigns. It's that time of year when mailboxes fill with requests from candidates seeking our support, whether through boots on the ground, campaign donations, or simply our vote. I am not going to get into any type of endorsements, if for no other reason but to keep you all reading. However, there are a few things that I do wish to point out.



Steve Miller

First off, it seems that people are passionate usually about one or two key issue that is important to them. Whether it be about the U.S. border policy, to guns to abortion to state and local issues. All those issues are important.

However, for me, and I hope also for you, that one of the issues has to do with labor. Having pro-labor candidates in every level of office helps us all in so many ways. From Federal candidates, that helps us in choosing members for the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) along with crafting federal laws to help labor, to state candidates who have a hand in state workers such as employees at the Washington State Ferries whom we are currently in negotiations with to local politics in the city and town councils which are just as important.

I remember a few years back when a member of the Gig harbor City Council, Robyn Denson, and myself teamed up and successfully beat back an attempt by the freedom foundation from enacting anti-labor rules that dealt with city negotiations. Robyn has since moved on to be a Pierce County Councilmember. For me, having a pro-labor candidate is on the top of my list.

The second thing that I have to point out is that no matter your choice of candidate, and regardless of your top issues, please make the effort to get out and VOTE.

Sometimes it may seem like it doesn't matter, but I want to share with you what Washington State is currently dealing with. Washington State primaries is a top two system. What that means is that the top two vote getters in the primary, regardless of party, get to move on toward the general election.

According to Washington's Secretary of State office, the second-place results in the lands commissioner race are the closest in the history of statewide primaries in Washington. There were 1.9 million people who participated in the primary with seven candidates running for lands commissioner. The difference between the second place finisher, Dave Upthegrove and third place finisher Sue Pederson is just 51 votes. This has set off an automatic recount but the main story here is that your vote, and every vote is important.

The last point I wish to raise is that of basic civility. The political atmosphere is extremely polarizing today, however there is no need for discussions to get heated. I would encourage to have those discussions and take the time to really listen to opposing views. You do not have to agree but if you take the time to listen you may at least understand where people are coming from. I encourage those discussions and even debate, and while we may have to agree to disagree, I believe that it is also important to show respect to everyone, especially those who may have opposing views.

Regarding the district, as highlighted in my previous article, we've thoroughly reviewed the results of our member satisfaction survey and appreciate everyone who participated. Your feedback is invaluable to us and we are working on ways to make improvements, particularly in areas of membership engagement.

I'd like to share some successes from the past quarter. Turlife, a company that we have organized a while back and have been negotiating with, has reached a tentative agreement after a year of hard and challenging negotiations led by Luke Ackerson. This is now awaiting for the final vote of our new members.

Also, all of our Business Reps have been working hard and have settled many grievances and arbitrations resulting in

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Grievance & Unfair Labor Practice Tracker

As of August 2024

Cases Filed	103
Cases Resolved	76
Arbitration Cases	32
Total Awarded	**$312,640.51**



Union brothers and sisters brought together for a worthy cause.

IAM Members and Friends Unite for Guide Dogs Fundraiser

A big "Thank you" to everyone who stepped up, snagged a raffle ticket, and helped us make this fundraiser a real win for Guide Dogs of America - Tender Loving Canines!



Swinging for a good cause at the Guide Dogs of America event.



City of Tacoma Fire Garage Steward Nick Corey and wife Devin showing their support.

Smiles all around for the pups!



Olive, Jaxxon's guide dog strikes a pose.

Holiday Office Closures

All District 160 offices will be closed on the following days:

Veteran's Day:
Monday, Nov. 11th

Thanksgiving:
Thursday, Nov. 28th

Native American Heritage Day:
Friday, Nov. 29th

Local Lodge Meeting Notices

Lodge 79 - Seattle

Regular Lodge Meeting – 5 p.m., 3rd Wednesday, 751 Meeting Hall, 9135 15th Place South, Seattle.

Executive Board Meeting – 5:00 p.m., the Monday preceding the regular lodge meeting (3rd Wednesday). District 160 Conference Room, 9135 15th Place South, Seattle.

Lodge 130 - Everett

Regular Lodge Meeting- 5 p.m., 2nd Thursday, Labor Temple, 2810 Lombard, Everett.

Lodge 282 - Bremerton

Regular Lodge Meeting – 5:00 p.m., 3rd Wednesday, 822 Park Avenue, Bremerton.
Executive Board Meeting – 5:30 p.m., 3rd Tuesday, 822 Park Avenue, Bremerton
Local 282 Whidbey Island – 4:45 p.m., 2nd Wednesday, NAS Whidbey Island.

Lodge 289 - Seattle

Regular Lodge Meeting – 6:30 p.m., 1st Wednesday, 751 Meeting Hall, 9135 15th Place South, Seattle.

Shop Stewards' Meeting – 6:00 p.m., 3rd Thursday, District 160 Conference Room, 9135 15th Place South, Seattle.

Executive Board Meeting – 5:30 p.m., 1st Wednesday, District 160 Conference Room, 9135 15th Place South, Seattle.

Lodge 297 - Tacoma

Regular Lodge Meeting – 5:00 p.m., 1st Thursday. Meeting location: Tacoma Firefighters Hall, 1109 S. 50th Street, Tacoma 98408.

Executive Board Meeting – 5:00 p.m., Tuesday preceding the Regular Lodge Meeting (1st Thursday), IBEW Hall, 3049 S. 36th ST #101, Tacoma, WA 98409.

Retirees' Club Meeting – All retirees are invited to attend meetings the 3rd Tuesday of the month. 9 am at the Lakewood IHOP at 10005 Lakewood Drive SW 98499. Breakfast starting at 9 am followed bymeeting at 10 am.

LL297
September Meeting Date Change
Tuesday September 10th
5:00 pm at Firefighter's Hall

Lodge 695 - Olympia

Regular Lodge Meeting – 6:30 p.m., 2nd Wednesday, Labor Temple, 119-1/2 North Capitol Way, Olympia.

Lodge 1690 - Anchorage

Regular Lodge Meeting – 5:30 p.m., 2nd Wednesday at the Union Hall, 701 W. 41st, Suite 102, Anchorage.

Lodge 2379 - Ferndale

Regular Lodge Meeting – 7:00 p.m., 1st Thursday, Lodge office, 2064 Vista Dr., Ferndale.
Executive Board Meeting – 6:00 p.m., first Thursday, Lodge office, 2064 Vista Dr., Ferndale.

District 160 Retirees Club

10:00 a.m., 1st Tuesday,
751 Meeting Hall, 9135 15th Pl. S., Seattle.

District 160 Officers & Staff

President
John Gehringer

Vice President
Dan Bassett

Secretary-Treasurer
John Decker

Sgt. at Arms
Josephie Ulrich

Trustees
Ted Taft
Dan Morgan
Tom Carroll

Directing Business Representative
Steve Miller

Business Representatives
Luke Ackerson
Zac Collins
Tommy Hunt
Beth Bergeon
Larry Stenseth

Organizer
Melissa Demyan

Evergreen Leader

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DBR Report: IAM Convention Coming to New York

Continued from page 1

many members receiving back pay for various issues. I ask that you take a look at our grievance chart (on page 1) so that you can see what we have been working on for our members.

Lastly elected delegates from each local lodge will be heading out to New York for the IAM national convention where we will be voting on proposed changes to our constitution. We will provide a report in our next ***Evergreen Leader***.

I hope you all enjoy the upcoming fall season and stay safe at work. As we celebrate Labor Day, don't forget to talk to your friends and family who may not have the benefits of a union contract and share with them the advantages of union membership. Let's continue to organize and strengthen our community.

Happy Labor Day!

In Memoriam

Local 79

Brett Walker 7/5/2024

District 160 Organizing Report

Organizing for Our Future: Why Union Solidarity Begins at the Ballot Box

By Melissa Demyan

As an organizer, I know firsthand our challenges in building our union's strength. Organizing is tough work—bringing workers together to stand up and fight back against significant opposition is never easy. However, without the right laws and policies in place, this work becomes nearly impossible.

Our ability to organize, negotiate, and secure better working conditions is directly tied to the laws that govern our workplaces and the institutions that enforce them. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), for instance, plays a crucial role in our work. It's the body we turn to when we file for union elections and challenge unfair labor practices. But here's the kicker—the NLRB's composition is determined by who's elected as President. If we have a President who doesn't value workers' rights, the NLRB can become a roadblock rather than a resource.



Melissa Demyan

The same goes for the Supreme Court. Appointed by the President, the justices on the Supreme Court have the power to make decisions that can either protect or undermine our ability to organize. Over the years, we've seen how the Court's rulings can either bolster our rights or set us back, making our jobs as organizers that much harder.

And let's not forget about our public sector brothers, sisters, and siblings. For those working at the city and county levels, the budgets that determine their pay and working conditions are decided by city and county council members. If we elect officials who don't prioritize public services or workers' rights, our public sector members suffer the consequences.

We also represent workers in the federal sector, where Congress decides their wages. These workers play a critical role in our union, and we need to organize even more members in this sector to strengthen our collective power. The decisions made by Congress have a direct impact on their livelihoods, and it's crucial that we elect leaders who will fight for fair wages and protect their rights on the job.

This is why it's so important to vote—and to vote with our union values in mind. Solidarity doesn't belong to a political party, but our ability to organize and advocate for workers' rights depends on the leaders we elect at every level of government. Whether it's the President appointing the NLRB and Supreme Court justices, Congress determining federal sector wages, or local council members deciding on public sector budgets, the people we choose to represent us have a direct impact on our work as organizers and the rights of all workers.

As we approach the upcoming elections, I encourage you to think about these connections. Ask yourself: Do the candidates support the right to organize? Will they fight for laws and policies that protect our rights on the job? Are they committed to ensuring safe, fair, and just workplaces for all? These are the questions that should guide our decisions at the ballot box.

Organizing is hard work, but it's work worth doing. And with the right leaders in place, it's work we can continue to do effectively. Let's make sure we're electing people who truly stand with us—people who understand that the fight for workers' rights is the fight for a better future for everyone.

Retirees

Local Lodge 79

Golden IAM Lifetime Membership Card awarded to
Ted Taft ..... The Gear Works..... 5/1/24
John Stebbins ..... Lake Union Drydock..... 6/1/24
Peter Hoffman ..... Ball Corporation 7/1/24

Local Lodge 130

David Nelson .....Acrowood 5/1/24
Kyle Kuntz .....Acrowood 7/1/24

Local Lodge 282

Kenneth Lundgreen ...City of Bainbridge Island..... 7/1/24

Local Lodge 289

William McLane..... McDowell Northwest 4/1/24
Charlie Griffin Jr. ...Salmon Bay Sand & Gravel..... 5/1/24
Craig Johnson.....UPS (Redmond) 6/1/24
Stephen Englebrick ..... Port of Seattle 7/1/24
Bradley Lamberton..... Hexcel Corporation 8/1/24

Local Lodge 297

David Vankekerix...City of Tacoma (General Unit) ... 4/1/24

Business Representatives' Reports

Summer Successes: Fighting for Members and Giving Back to the Community

By Luke Ackerson

Servicing Update

It's been a busy summer; I have filed 13 Grievances and 8 Unfair Labor Practices since the last Evergreen Leader was published. I had a few grievances that were scheduled for arbitration over the past few months and all three were favorable outcomes for our members.



First, American President Lines (APL) assigned work to non-IAM mechanics, which is very specifically defined and protected in our Collective Bargaining Agreement. Just a few days before the arbitration was to be held, APL settled the grievance and paid $150,000 to our members for lost overtime opportunities.

Second, Community Transit terminated one of our members and with the help of our great stewards, we were able to convince the employer that their case wasn't as strong as they thought it was. This was a complex case and the outcome of taking this to arbitration was very uncertain. The member decided it was best if they didn't return to work at Community Transit and authorized me to engage in negotiations with the employer for a settlement in exchange for dropping the grievance. After some tough negotiations with the employer, we settled at $55,000.

Last, Community Transit enacted a COVID-19 vaccine mandate in 2021 which required employees to be vaccinated or be separated from employment. Several members chose not to receive the vaccine and were separated from employment on January 1st, 2022. The stewards and I negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the employer that included, among other things, a recall process for those who were separated if Community Transit ever lifted the vaccine mandate.

In March 2023, Community Transit lifted the vaccine requirement but refused to recall the separated employees. We immediately filed a grievance. Over the next few months, they recalled two of the three separated employees but refused to recall the last employee. The arbitration hearing took place in June and we received the arbitrator's decision in late August. The arbitrator is requiring Community Transit to return our member to work and to make all three grievants whole for all lost compensation due to not being recalled immediately. The amount that will be paid to our members has not been calculated yet because we just received the decision, but I will report it in my next article.

Local 2379

In 2018 Local 2379 had approximately 800-900 members. The big fluctuations came from Alcoa and Fairhaven shipyard constantly ramping up and slowing down. In 2019 Fairhaven Shipyard entered bankruptcy and closed, laying off approximately 75 members. In 2021 Alcoa Intalco Works Smelter closed due to high energy prices and unfavorable global market conditions, laying off 650 members. Shortly after the Alcoa layoff, Montigo Del Ray laid off 20 members and the City of Blaine reduced the size of the bargaining unit by not filling vacant positions, instead of a layoff. The result is Local 2379 has approximately 75 members. Despite the small size of the Local, they continue to do great things for the membership, the IAM, and the community.

In June I finished negotiating the last of the closure agreement with Alcoa. The piece that took the most time was closing a jointly administered Trust account that provided supplemental unemployment to our members. After the last payment was made per the Trust plan rules, there was still some money left over. Due to IRS regulations, the funds could only be donated to registered non-profits, or face a 100% excise tax. The issue was put in front of the members of Local 2379, including some former Alcoa employees and retirees, to decide where to donate the money. After some discussion, the membership voted to donate the money to local organizations that supported IAM members during the layoffs and difficult times that we had experienced over the past 4 years.

Here are the details:

- $130,000 to Whatcom Community College to establish a Scholarship in the name of the IAM.
- $130,000 to Bellingham Technical College to establish a Scholarship in the name of the IAM.
- $130,000 to Northwest Indian College to establish a Scholarship in the name of the IAM.
- $40,000 to the Whatcom Museum Foundation to assist with establishing an exhibit that contains many items from the Intalco Works Smelter
- $33,000 each to 7 local food banks that serve the communities where Local 2379 has members
- $70,000 to the Boys and Girls Club of Whatcom County to assist with Before and After School Programs and food service to their members.



Business Rep Luke Ackerson presents a $70,000 check to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Whatcom County.

Each of the scholarships prioritizes IAM members and the structure will allow the scholarships to continue indefinitely so that the IAM will always have a presence in the community.

These organizations always stood by our members and provided invaluable resources and support when we needed them most. The colleges all provided training programs and assistance to our members; the Boys and Girls Club programs were used by many of our members who worked rotating shifts and needed a safe place for their children; the food banks have always been there for our laid-off members going as far as coordinating specific days for IAM members to pick up food during the mass layoffs; and the Whatcom Museum is establishing an exhibit to carry on the legacy that began with nearly 1000 workers organizing with the IAM in 1966.

Visiting all 7 food banks and seeing the situation first-hand was very distressing. The Directors from each of the food banks explained that their donations had been dwindling while the need for food had doubled in the past two years. I scheduled appointments with each Director several hours before the start of their distribution and in every single case there was a line established 3 or 4 hours before the food bank even opened. One food bank told me they used the last of their federal grant to purchase fresh produce just two days before we arrived to deliver the donation.

Last, as parents, my wife and I make it a priority to instill certain values in our children through conversation and real-world experiences. I brought my children with me to each of the 7 food banks and the Boys and Girls Club. They toured the same Boys and Girls Club where I spent a lot of time as a child while my dad worked at the Alcoa Smelter.

At the food banks, they were able to see first-hand, that anybody can fall on hard times, that as a society we can have more empathy and compassion for our families, friends, and neighbors, and that we can positively impact others by making small changes in our behavior and putting the needs of others before our own. These real-world lessons tie back to the IAM's core values of solidarity, community service, and advocacy for working families.

I can't emphasize how important it is for all of us to be active in our communities and do what we can to support our local food banks. There are many hard-working people out there who are deciding between paying rent and buying groceries. I don't expect that each local will match what 2379 donated, but we can all do something and I strongly encourage all of our members to reach out to their local union leadership to start this discussion.

By Beth Bergeon

Hello Brothers, Sisters and Siblings!

Summer, my favorite time of year is coming to an end. I love the hot sunny days, the long dog days of summer, morning reruns on the TV, lazy days by the pool leading to crisp fall mornings, warm afternoons, school supplies, new clothes, seeing friends again – uh, wait - fast forwarding an indeterminate number of years. Well not exactly the summer I had, but I hope you had an opportunity to take some time for yourself to create new memories.



I feel like this is said so often as to be cliché, but it's been a very busy and productive summer. Brandon Hemming and I have begun negotiations for MultiCare's first contract. We have had very little progress, but as we move into full-day weekly bargaining, we hope the Company will fully engage in the process and give the membership the contract they deserve. We currently have five Unfair Labor Practice charges pending against MultiCare relating to denying access, Weingarten violations, and violating the right to organize.

Brandon and I are fully engaged in handling day-to-day tasks and contracts, keeping us very busy. This is a classic tactic employed by big corporations to intimidate us into going away. Our efforts to organize the other OCEDs are ongoing. I hope to have good news sometime in the near future.

We have an interesting upcoming arbitration after a non cdl employee was terminated after a positive random drug test for marijuana despite the company policy not prohibiting such behavior. Stay tuned, it's a high-stakes case for the Union and the Company.

I have several tough bargaining sessions happening right now, all within the public sector. The recent election of conservative councils and boards has led to constricted budgets resulting in a lack of prioritization of employees. The idea districts and cities can cut budgets, staff, and wages without reducing workloads has become a cry for justice from the members. The members are committed to fighting for fair compensation and a competitive living wage. We will continue to use all of our resources to press these agencies into fair compensation and a fair contract.

Before I go, I want to make a plea to all the women out there who may be interested in getting more involved in the Union but are unsure how to go about it. Please submit your interest for the LEADS program for next year. It's a wonderful program that only takes up an hour of your time per month via Zoom. It covers a variety of training topics and also connects you with fellow female Union members across North America. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

Enjoy all Fall has to offer, pumpkin patches, falling leaves, Halloween and a good thunderstorm.

Cheers!

More Business Representatives' Reports on page 4

Business Representatives' Reports

By Tommy Hunt

Hello Union Family! I hope you all have been enjoying the summer! As summer wraps up and the fall colors come, I'm happy to announce we recently settled a significant grievance with the City of Seattle after they wrongfully contracted out work that should have been performed by our members. This was a blatant violation of our collective bargaining agreement, which clearly states that work traditionally done by our members cannot be outsourced without proper consultation and agreement.



When we found out about this, we jumped into action and filed a grievance. Our position was clear: the City not only breached the contract but also put our members' job security at risk. This wasn't just a technical violation; it was a threat to our members' livelihoods and a challenge to the principles we've fought to establish in our agreement.

The grievance process took time. We gathered evidence, and pushed back against the City's justifications. After several rounds of negotiations, it became clear that the City recognized their mistake. They decided to settle rather than drag this out further. As a result, we secured a $25,000 settlement, which was distributed among the four members directly affected by the contracting out. This wasn't just about the money; it was about making sure the City acknowledged their mistake and understood that we won't tolerate any violations of our agreement.

On top of that, I've also been busy wrapping up three separate negotiations with Amentum, Menzies, and Valiant, each one a success in its own right.

With Amentum, we were negotiating for our Apache, Blackhawk, and Chinook helicopter mechanics. These guys are highly skilled and play a crucial role in their work. We made sure the new agreement improved wages, benefits, and other items important to the membership. It was important to lock down a deal that reflects the level of skill and dedication these members bring to the table. In addition to improved wages and benefits, we were able to create a separate bank of sick leave with up to eighty hours of rollover. Having this additional bank of leave specifically for sick leave will allow our member to retain PTO benefits with having to burn their paid leave balance down for being sick or having to care for loved ones.

Over at Menzies, we represent the fuelers and maintenance workers at Ted Stevens International airport in Anchorage. These negotiations were all about addressing long-standing issues around pay and working conditions. We managed to secure a contract that not only raises wages but also includes critical safety measures. Working in an airport environment can be tough and sometimes dangerous, so getting these protections in place was a big win. Because of the work the negotiation committee put in, we were able to secure a $7/hr. raise in wages during the first year of the new CBA.

Lastly, we concluded negotiations with Valiant, representing our AWACS aviation instructors. These instructors are essential to national defense, and we wanted to make sure their contract reflects the importance of the work they do. The new agreement includes improvements in wages, benefits, and overall working conditions.

Settling the grievance with the City of Seattle and successfully negotiating these contracts with Amentum, Menzies, and Valiant show how critical it is to stand firm and advocate strongly for our members. Through these efforts, we continue to secure the rights, protections, and fair treatment that our members deserve, ensuring they can work with dignity and respect in their respective fields.

By Zac Collins

Hi Sisters and Brothers,

Seeing so many of you at Top Golf for our Guide Dogs Fundraiser this summer was truly a joy. The event was a great opportunity to come together for a good cause while enjoying a fun and relaxed atmosphere. I know I had an amazing time, and I hope you did too. The energy and positivity that filled the air were truly inspiring, and it warmed my heart to witness the generosity and support from all of the members and guests who attended.



Looking ahead, I'm already looking forward to the possibility of planning and participating in more of these heartwarming events in the future. The experience of coming together to make a positive impact is something truly special, and I'm eager to continue supporting such a meaningful cause alongside all of you. Thank you once again for making the Guide Dogs Fundraiser a memorable and impactful occasion, and here's to many more in the future!

In my most recent article, I delved into the intricate and demanding UPS National contract negotiations. I'm happy to report that following the initial rejection, the national committee reconvened at the bargaining table with the company and they were able to secure an improved agreement for the members, ultimately leading to the approval of the new 5-year agreement. This accomplishment stands as a testament to the dedication and hard work of all parties involved.

I'm pleased to share an update on our recent negotiations with Pacific Power Group in Kent. These talented mechanics specialize in industrial and marine engines, along with a wide array of power generation solutions. Our negotiation team and I were able to secure significant improvements in various areas. We successfully negotiated higher wages, improved overtime language, additional holidays, and more paid time off. Additionally, we completely overhauled their retirement plan, ensuring better benefits and security for their future. Our fruitful negotiations with Pacific Power Group have strengthened our partnership and will contribute to a mutually beneficial working relationship.

Last but not least, I'd like to highlight recent negotiations on behalf of the indispensable mechanics at Sea Star Stevedoring, located at the Tote terminal on the Tacoma waterfront. This terminal serves as a crucial link, facilitating the regular arrival and departure of two ships every week between Tacoma and Anchorage, Alaska. These highly skilled and dedicated individuals bear significant responsibility for the upkeep and repair of a diverse range of equipment essential for the efficient loading and unloading of various vehicles, equipment, and supplies vital for the residents of Alaska. Their expertise ensures the seamless operation of these critical activities, contributing to the region's logistics and supply chain. The recent ratification of a new contract stands as a testament to the value and importance we place on these exceptional team members. This newly improved contract brings forth a series of advancements, including unparalleled wage increases, enhanced vacation accrual, and amplified 401k contributions.

I hope that you are having a fun and safe summer, see you soon!

By Larry Stenseth

Sisters and Brothers

I would like to use my allotted space to give voice and recognition to those that are doing the work. Theresa Robertson and Heather Forster Women's Committee, Scott Cronkrite Veterans Committee, Anthony Crutcher and Teresa Robertson Human Rights Committee Dan Corrigan and Greg Ingersoll CNRNW LRC and Stan Wankowski and Scott Cronkrite Legislative Committee. Thank you all for your hard work and dedication.



Below is Brother Wankowski's Legislative Committee report:

The Legislative Committee for District 160, Local 282, has been busy engaging the membership with our politicians to get a better idea of who our political leaders are and what they are about. It is the Legislative Committee's goal to have the members knowledgably choose the candidates that the Lodge will endorse. Through interactions, discussions and reaching out, our committee is bringing the concerns of the members to those who make the laws.

Our program includes sending delegates to lodge summits and legislative gatherings, inviting local officials to address the lodge, Legislative updates. We are still in the growing phase, but including all of our members in contacting and communicating with our representatives. Upon joining and the member feeling comfortable, each member of the Legislative Committee is assigned to a political leader as the primary contact and liaison. This helps the member to grow in their ability to give voice to the union's concerns as well as increase their confidence in approaching leadership to discuss any issues. Our members contact and invite local politicians to open our meetings. We ask them for 15 minutes of introduction and offer them the next fifteen minutes for questions. We also invite them to dinner, served a 1/2 hour before the meeting, increasing the chance for the guest leader to interact with the membership.

The lodge has recently hosted Stephanie Hahn, of Representative Derek Kilmer's Office, Senator Drew MacEwan, Representative Michelle Caldier and Senator Emily Randall. Hilary Franz is also scheduled to speak with us, allowing our members personal contact with the leading Federal 6th District Congressional Candidates. It has been a true pleasure bringing our civic leaders face to face with our membership. Interactions between our members and the guests have been friendly and mutually beneficial. Getting the members out to Legislative and other Union events is also important. The camaraderie and common cause with members from other areas serves to strongly support the members' Union spirit. To know that we are not alone and isolated but part of a greater force and a greater movement becomes apparent when surrounded by Sisters and Brothers who are also actively doing something to improve safety, worker rights and justice in the workplace.

We also ask our members to provide reports from Conventions and other meetings. Our members' insights into these meetings and conventions helps others who may go to the same gatherings fully participate. These reports enable our members to be informed of issues and ideas they may not have been aware of. They may also be inspired to step up to go out and represent our Union as delegates to the Legislative and other committees. Interacting with our legislative leaders is a springboard to increasing overall Union participation. Members are interested to hear from the political leaders and the politicians certainly want to hear from us. The interaction gives our leaders a direct view of our constituency and the members can get answers directly from their political leaders, helping them to feel empowered as members of the Union.

Stan Wankowski
Chief Steward Legislative committee Chairperson IAM&AW District 160, Nipsic Local 282



More Business Representatives' Reports on page 3