



## LOCAL 2-21 C.A.T. Letter

Distribution: # 28

Date: July 9, 2009

The main purpose of this C.A.T. report is to answer some frequently asked questions we have been receiving lately as well as to address some concerns that are popping up around the mill.

We've been asked if there is an absentee ballot that we could use being many people will be on vacation and out of town for the week of the information meetings and the vote. The answer to that is "no, not yet". When we were with P.A.C.E., they never had the absentee ballot but when we merged with the USW, we accepted an agreement that all paper Locals would adopt the USW by laws by the year 2011. The USW does have the absentee ballot in their by laws BUT we have been holding off as long as we can to adopt the USW by-laws in its entirety because with it comes things less desirable such as their dues structure and operating mandates. You are all aware that we have taken on some of the USW mandates but only those that were time framed that we had to adopt by certain preset deadlines. So, the answer is we do not have absentee ballots at the present time but we will in 2011.

Two other questions I'd like to address are; why are we having the informational meetings 2 days before we vote and why can't we hand out the proposals ahead of time so you can prepare to ask questions during the meetings? The answers are; when we left negotiations on June 12<sup>th</sup>, we were left with a lot of work to do before we could hold the informational meetings. It would have been difficult to hurry up and get things done by the end of the month. The reason I say "by the end of the month" is because once July got here, the only time we could hold any meetings or conduct a vote was from July 15<sup>th</sup> to July 22<sup>nd</sup>. as that was the only week in the month everyone would be at the mill (because of the staggered market related outages). With that small time frame, we had to schedule the auditorium as well as make sure key personnel were available for these presentations. While it was difficult to get everything together, we were finally able to secure Monday July 20<sup>th</sup> for the informational meetings and will hold the voting at the hall on Wednesday July 22<sup>nd</sup>. As far as the proposals are concerned, it was my decision not to hand them out ahead of time because there is a lot to explain about the many TA's (tentative agreements) and if we just handed them out, many would think they understand what is there and not attend the informational meetings. To be completely honest with you, I need all of you to show up at the meetings as there are a lot of things we need to discuss that are not in the proposal. Please, regardless of how you presently feel about the contract proposal, and regardless whether you feel you will vote yes or no on it, please attend one of these important informational meetings and bring your spouse or significant other with you. I promise you won't be sorry.

It seems as though there are many things happening around the mill that are by design. What I mean are things that hurt this union and divide this membership. On a daily basis we are hearing about issues scattered throughout the entire facility that are creating a lot of heartache....things like transferring people around when it doesn't make sense, running short, unrealistic expectations of the multi-craft agreement with our maintenance people, not replacing people in a timely fashion, scheduling issues, and not getting a day off just to name a few of them. This is by design folks. It's absolutely no surprise as this is how a company acts when we are in the situation we currently find ourselves. Most of you are upset and rightfully so. You all know we are number 1 in the paper industry and can't understand why we would be treated like this. Why would a company want to deliberately unsettle the apple cart? All I can say is welcome to the real world, the world of greedy corporations. Remember friends, while flexibility is a huge issue, it isn't our only issue. Company Proposal #1 wants the right to cross lines of progression with both work and people, as well as to eliminate a Mediator's ruling that prohibits them from doing so. This is huge folks, and it directly ties in with Company Proposal 22 which is job cuts with poor wage adjustments. We also have the proposals to work Christmas, to eliminate meal tickets or not replacing people on a temporary vacancy. These are the kind of issues we need to address at the informational meetings.

When the company recently ran an article in the bulletin about Luke ratifying their contract, they forgot to add that flexibility wasn't on Luke's agenda. They were forced to compromise on their Job Evaluation language as well as being forced off of first dollar insurance. As with much of the information the company has put out lately, this article seemed skewed at best. This is another example of what we will be addressing at the informational meetings.

Because the voting will be held at the hall from 6:00AM to 7:00PM on Wednesday July 22<sup>nd</sup>, THERE WILL NOT BE A STEWARDS MEETING THIS MONTH. We tried rescheduling it but whatever we tried to do had a down side to it, so we had no choice but to cancel it completely for the month of July.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO ATTEND THE INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS AND GET OUT AND VOTE!!**

In Solidarity,

Bryon Branstrom