



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

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The headlines in the Escanaba Daily Press read “**NewPage union votes ‘No’**”. What that headline doesn’t say is that some of our members came in on crutches to vote, others with the assistance of walking canes as they just got out of surgery on their knees, others drove 110 miles (one way) to cast their vote because they were on vacation and last but not least, the headline doesn’t state that Trudy Broman had her daughter drive her to the hall so she could vote.

My point is this: We can write all the newsletters we want. We can put out CAT reports and the C-5 leaflets and we can even post our issues on the message board, but how do we know if you are listening or getting the message? How do we even know if you are reading the material? I’ll tell you how, by coming out to vote 722 strong. Even more importantly is the message you delivered when you did vote. What an overwhelming defeat. You sent a message loud and clear. Thank you all for coming out. Your vote does matter. You sent a big message to the company but we will also bring these numbers to Pittsburgh with us on August 4<sup>th</sup>. Remember, the International wanted us to vote and to bring them a strong NO vote so they knew where our members stood. Well, you made it very clear where you stand and that is right beside the committee.

With the first vote under our belts, we need to concentrate on what’s next. First we’ll be going to Pittsburgh to meet with the USW with the expectation of getting some serious support. Second we will prepare to return to the negotiation table. If Bill Smith is going to treat us like he did the Luke mill, he will try to do a little tweaking here and there and think that will fly. It won’t!! That is when I’ll be asking you to come out in the big numbers again to show we are not going to take it without a fight. We need to keep sending a message until the company takes their hands off our throats. Remember, as we progress, things are going to get tougher as the company will start with their threats and intimidating tactics. (You might even get another letter to your homes. ☺ )

In the mean time I want you to know some of the exercises you can expect to see in our campaign. Your C-5 committee has been busy working on ramping things up. The yard signs have come in and the C-5 group will be handing them out to anyone who lives in a highly visible area. We only ordered 150 of these so we need to be smart as to where we place them. Window signs for both our members and area businesses have been ordered and the billboard by the Buck Inn has been secured for 2 months, from the middle of August through the middle of October. This group is taking it upon themselves to visit every business in town to have them place a supportive sign in their windows. In return we will run a “Union Newsletter Extra” listing the names of all these merchants and asking you to please support those that support us. (By the way, the C-5 group is looking for people willing to carry our big sign in the back of their truck for a few days at a time. This should be when you are on days so it is most visible. Anyone interested please contact Jim Sivertsen at 47 winder x 3045 or by calling 428-4340)

I’ve been getting a ton of compliments lately about communication and how the membership feels they are informed of the events happening throughout negotiations. Communication is not a one or two person job. The committees we have in place are directly responsible for making it happen. The C-5 committee lead by Jim Sivertsen is relatively new but has hit the ground running. You’ve already seen several leaflets from them with more to come. More importantly though is that this group is focused more about strategic campaigns. They are more behind the scenes getting things done such as the exercises I mentioned above. The CAT members are a huge asset to us as they do all the grunt work to get the CAT reports out. There are many last minute calls to Joe Moberg, the CAT leader and instantly that group is on it. Seriously, one time the copies were still warm from the printer at the hall as they were being delivered throughout the mill. How cool is that? I’m bringing attention to these committees because without them our communication would not exist. No one can do it alone and I want to express a very sincere appreciation for these people on behalf of the Bargaining Committee.

Once again, I just want to thank everyone that got out and voted. Not only did you send a strong message to the company and the USW International but you sent a strong message to the committee. I heard you say that if we keep fighting at the table, you’ll be there in the numbers to support us. I know many of you think I’m just blowing smoke here when I say this but you are the best membership in the paper sector of the USW. You get involved, you educate yourselves by reading whatever comes your way, and you vote. Thank you.....you all rock!!!

In Solidarity,

Bryon Branstrom