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21 NEWS

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21 News is a periodic publication of USW (United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union) Local 2-21, 1201 Sheridan Road, Escanaba, Michigan 49829. The views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily that of the International Union, the Local 2-21 membership, or the officers of these bodies. The editor reserves the right to refuse any article that is detrimental to the Local Union or the USW. Article accuracy and content is the responsibility of the author.

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| **Important Information & Events** |
| Employee Assistance Program (EAP)  www.freckmanandassociates.com (800) 331-3226 |
| **Retiree Get Together** First Wednesday of month 10am at the Union Hall |
| **Union Meeting**: Second Wednesday - 7 pm – Dinner 6 pm |
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| **Steward’s Meeting**: Fourth Wednesday - 3 pm at the Hall |
| **Welfare Club Meeting**: First Monday of the month - 7 pm at the Mead Rod & Gun Club |
| **Total Benefit Solutions**: Union Hall hours on the first two Wednesdays of each month. Call 1.877.265.2212 to schedule an appointment. |
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| **Committee Members**  Work Cell  President Steve Benoit ……….…………………233-2529 399-4195  1st Vice Chuck Way.……….…………………. 233-2705 280-1698  2nd Vice Bob Larson….………….…………….. 420-2256  3rd Vice Jeff Skorupski…..............…………... 233-2556 399-5472  Insurance Gerald Kell………………………..…...233-3135 869-7943  Comp Ross Strand…………………………..233-2549 280-1494  Secretary Brandon Stromberg……………….....233-2714 284-1604  Treasurer Guy Trudell………………..…..……. .233-2534 399-9143 |
| Rapid Response…………..Brandon Stromberg….233-2714 284-1604  Rapid Response…………..Gerald Kell…………....233-3135 869-7943  Hall Rental ……………......Steve Kennedy . . . . ..………….. . 789-1933 |
| forum.png www.pacelocal21.proboards.com  FB.pngwww.facebook.com/USWlocal21 |

***USW Local 21 Keys to Success***

***Brandon Stromberg, Secretary/Rapid Response***

***Serve and defend from the start.***

Your union is here to serve and defend you. None of us are perfect and we all make mistakes. When some of those mistakes require an area steward or committee member, we are ready. When we serve and defend each other’s best interests, we are at our best.

***Close Rumors-Stay educated.***

It seems like everyday something is changing at the mill: a new SOP, policy, or insurance provider based out of Tennessee, etc. If you want to find out what is changing next you can always find someone who knows something, but to better ensure you’re dealing with the facts, contact a steward, committee member, or peruse the multiple communication mediums we use including the Message Board, Newsletter, CAT Letters, or even Facebook. Make a point to come to Union meetings and discover the latest information. Knowledge is only as powerful as it is accurate.

***Improve your senses.***

Be an extra set of “eyes and ears.” Sometimes there are changes made or current practiced in the mill that go against our bargained contract. Let your area steward or committee member know immediately. Not sure what is bargained or non-bargained work? Grab our contract book and enhance your senses. Never stop learning.

***Reduce division and encourage solidarity.***

We’re all different. We have individual strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes, but when we put our differences aside and work together we are strong. If you are unable to resolve a conflict between yourself and another member, contact your area steward or Union committee member for help. Everything is possible when we work together. Solidarity forever!

***Efficiently assemble new ways to be an emissary.***

There are those who prefer to stereotype us in a negative manner and portray unions as being comprised of nothing more than fat cat bureaucrats living lavishly off dues dollars and cutting shady deals with politicians. The reality is quite the opposite. Whether we are at work or in the community we carry our Union’s reputation with us. Be kind, be respectful, be honest, and we will slowly change this perception.

***Implement Get Members Involved (GMI).***

Let’s be honest, we are strong because we have involved members. As members retire and jobs are curtailed, we must strive to find new ways to involve members in their union. The union is us. We have the power to make it better.

*“Let’s go build the union.”*

*-District Director Mike Bolton*

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***Community Pride, Community Wide***

***Gerald Kell, Insurance Advocate, Rapid Response***

Our USW Local is active in community projects, fudnraisers, and events. We pride ourselves on being involved, but plainly put, it’s not necessarily a result of an active campaign to get our name out there as much as it is a focused response to our membership’s want and willingness to get involved and help. The overwhelming majority of our sponsored events are derived from individual activism from Local 21 members. I’m pleased to be updating everyone about a community-based project in which we’re involved so often. The balancing act we all must perform due to our hectic work schedules can make it difficult for some members to attend these events—just another reason to expand our community actions.

This will be the first year we’ve teamed up with Garceau Insurance and Frederick Family Chriopractic to sponsor the annual initiative aimed at cleaning up downtown Escanaba—the Community Pride Community Wide Clean-Up Day. Being a primary sponsor of the event, we are requesting that our members and their families get out there and show our union pride and solidarity by helping a great program. We’re great at shop sterwardship, let’s show what we can accomplish when that same effort is applied to the community. This year’s event will be held on Saturday, May 21st. We will be cleaning streets, alleys, cutting grass, painting, removing weeds, and picking up litter. Additionally, UP PC Repair will be leading a presentation to the Escanaba 5th grade students to help teach stewardship and community pride. The event begins at noon at the Downtown Development Authority located at1025 Ludington Street.

Volunteering for a great cause is often enough to get people motivated, but as the proverb Kubrick made famous says, “All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy” which is why the event’s organizers have sought out additional sponsors to provide a fun-filled celebration following the clean-up effort. There will be live music, free food and beverage in a family cook out style, games and prizes for the kids, a bike giveaway from Mr. Bike & Ski, and much much more!

At the mill we’re always struggling with understaffing, so we understand that many hands make a significant impact on the success of group actions.

***SCOTUS Ruling Favors Unions***

***Gerald Kell, Rapid Response***

 The direct impact of legislative and judicial action on our jobs has been consistently increasing for decades. Although I hate to sound repetitive, it’s clearly more important now than ever before because of this increase. Whether it be an environmental law from the Environmental Protection Agency, trade policy enforcement by the Department of Commerce, or National Labor Relations Board rulings, we can trace the path directly to our industry and employment. A recent Supreme Court decision is no different—Friedrichs vs. California Teachers Association. If you read the Newsletter regularly, you may recall that I covered this specific case a couple months ago.

Founded in 1863, the California Teachers Association has become one of the strongest advocates for educators in the country. CTA includes teachers, counselors, school librarians, social workers, psychologists, and nurses. These educators in the K-12 school system are joined by community college faculty, California State University faculty, and education support professionals to make CTA the most inclusive and most powerful voice of educators in the state of California.

Essentially, this case was an attempt perpetrated by a pro bono right-wing legal group called Center for Individual Rights to go above and beyond right to work for less legislation. Don’t be fooled by their name, their intent is not to secure individual rights, it’s to make union members finance the freeloaders who enjoy the resources and contracts of a union, but refuse to contribute. Rebecca Friedrichs, the namesake of the case, was simply used to personify the heavily partisan group. What was her biggest gripe about the union? She had asked for a teacher’s aide and through negotiations the union was only able to secure her a raise. So, to be clear, she was mad at the union because they couldn’t get her exactly what she wanted, even though they tried to. Currently, non-participatory members of a union still must contribute, in the form of agency fees (dues) for the services the union is required by law to provide to them, including contract negotiation and adjudication of grievances. This was based on a long standing Supreme Court ruling from 1977, Abood vs. Detroit Board of Educaton. This ruling has been a thorn in the side of the anti-labor movement for a very long time and a new ruling to overturn it could’ve been disastrous for the integrity of public unions everywhere. As we already know, what happens in the public sector usually impacts us in the private unions sooner than later. With public union membership making up more and more of the national union workforce, it’s important we keep an eye on these attacks.

How they ruled:

For us-

* Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg
* Justice Sonia Sotomayor
* Justice Stephen G. Breyer
* Justice Elena Kagan

Against us-

* Chief Justice John Roberts
* Justice Clarence Thomas
* Justice Anthony Kennedy
* Justice Samuel Alito

When I last reported on this case, the outlook was dire. With a conservative majority on the Court, we anticipated a 5-4 loss in this case. With the recent passing of Justice Antonin Scalia, the highest court in the land saw a shift that has already impacted several high publicity cases, including Friedrichs vs CTA. With the Senate refusing to confirm the recent nomination of Judge Merrick Garland, the court is left with an even amount of judges meaning any split decision will default to court precedence—the 1977 Abood decision in this situation. There’s no question about it, this is a win for teachers, public workers, unions, and the middle class. Simply put, these anti-union measures are pursued for one reason: to defund the unions and the collective voice of working men and women everywhere.

While there is no individual expectation of members to be cognizant of every Supreme Court case litigated, trade policy negotiated, or proposed law considered by Congress, I encourage each of you to at least keep up on the legislative and judicial topics that can change your world for better or worse.

***Report Injuries***

***Ross Strand, Workman’s Comp Advocate***

Make sure you report every injury no matter how small. The Company is questioning all work injuries, so cover your butt no matter how minor you think the injury may be. We know people usually don't typically like to report bumps, bruises, strains, aches, because often times they go away a short time later and it’s sort of just an accepted part of the job. Those days are gone, if you break a nail, turn it in. Failing to do so may land you in HR explaining why you didn't and could result in a reprimand, or worse. The following is from the Safety Policy related to reporting injuries:

**Scope and Purpose**

There is an expectation that accidents, incidents and/or injuries will be reported immediately. Some of the reasons to immediately report accidents and/or injuries are:

* + - An injury can be treated promptly which can easily keep a minor injury from becoming a serious medical condition. An example is treating a minor cut to prevent an infection.
    - An accident may result in damage to equipment or property that needs immediate attention to eliminate hazards to others. An example is crane damage.

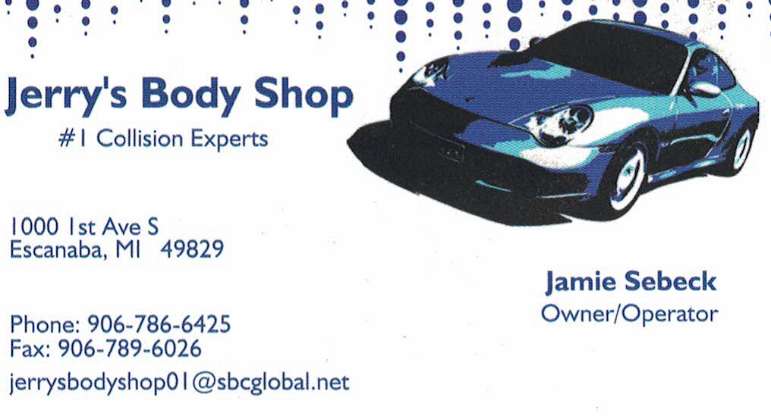
Immediate reporting of incidents and injuries means reporting of the incident or injury during your working shift. Cumulative trauma disorders must be reported upon the onset of symptoms. This reporting can be done in a number of ways.

Examples include:

* Notifying your supervisor, foreman or area manager
* Entering the information into the Safety Incident Tracking System (SITS), also known as “MedGate”.
* Reporting to Health Services
* Paging or calling the on-call person for your respective area

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***Luck is Not a Plan***

***Margaret Noreus, Edward Jones Financial Advisor***

It’s always nice to be lucky. But when it comes to financial matters, you’re better off not counting on Lady Luck. Instead, focus on setting and pursuing goals.

For starters, be specific. Instead of telling yourself that you want to retire early, set a goal of retiring at 62. You can then use this target number to help guide your overall investment strategy. Also, prioritize your various financial goals. This will help you decide how and when to allocate resources. Be prepared to change goals as circumstances change. You’ll find it easier to maintain this flexibility fi your investment portfolio has sufficient resources to allow you to change direction, as needed.

Finally, to eventually achieve your goals, you need to measure progress regularly and make adjustments as necessary. Don’t delay acting on your goals – they’ll be easier to attain with time on your side.

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***The Yard***

***Charles Way, 1st Vice President***

  The Yard department woes continue as manpower is still a problem. They are about to lose their only trained labor pool. We await communication from the Company as to whether or not they will receive any of the new hires for relief. The switch crew will have no one for vacation relief when the current labor pool gets assigned permanent status in another department. We have talked to HR personnel about this, but at this time have no answers to pass on. There will be some Summer Help in the Yard but they will perform summer time duties such as groundskeeping. One or two people may return from being off sick which may help but it looks as it will not be enough.

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**April’s Local**

**Business Feature**

Our membership has a significant impact on the local economy. Let’s keep that impact a positive one by shopping locally and being sure to frequent establishments that give back to our community. Shop at a local small business and much more of the money stays local. Remember to let them know you saw them in our newsletter!



Pioneer TV and Appliance is a retail store locate right in the heart of downtown Escanaba. Their friendly staff is made up of a dozen part-time and full-time employees. It was originally founded back in 1975 by Terry DeRouin and Larry Shanahan—two home builders who desperately needed to respond to a dried up housing market due to the closing of the local Harnischfeger manufacturing plant. They started Pioneer Kitchens and focused primarily on kitchen/bathroom remodeling. Not long after opening, it was clear the market was flooded with others providing similar services so they entertained the idea of selling appliances. Larry ordered a set of Speed Queen Laundry. It took several months, but once the word got out they could not keep the laundry in stock. They eventually added kitchen appliances, service technicians, and moved to a larger building.

Adding to their success, Terry sought out his brother Tim’s advice to get into home entertainment with satellite, TV, and HiFi. The business has prospered and now also offers a full sleep center with a variety of new mattresses. They also offer a great selection of refurbished appliances.

Here at Pioneer, we pride ourselves on providing every customer with a superior product at a competitive price and great service. Larry’s son, Mike, manages the service department and his daughter, Leah, is one of the top salespersons. Terry’s son, Dan, runs the day to day operations as Terry is now semi-retired. We are grateful to all those that continue to shop locally and support not only our business but all the local businesses and we hope to continue serving the Delta County area for many years to come!

***Sisu***

***Bob Larson, 2nd Vice President***

The Union Committee will be going to Pittsburgh next week for the USW sponsored Paper Bargaining Conference. The knowledge we’ll gain at this conference will definitely be advantageous and necessary for the upcoming contract negotiations with Verso, or whoever owns the Escanaba Paper Company at that point. The Company has their agenda, and we have ours. They certainly will not be willing to just *give* us anything, we will only successfully get our fair share if we demonstrate a united front. Stand together. It will most likely be a difficult fight, but we are Yoopers and have always relished adversity. The Finnish word, *Sisu*, is used to describe determination or bravery and quite literally translates to “having guts.” We’re all going to need a little *Sisu* for the upcoming contract.

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| **601 Ludington Street Escanaba, MI 49829** |
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| **\*Medicare Supplemental Plans\*** |
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| **\*Part D Prescription Plans\*** |
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***Union Outreach***

***Brandon Stromberg, Rapid Response***

The first time AFL-CIO Staff Rep. Kathy Carlson and I met with the AFSCME Local 1424 Executive Board was over a year ago.  They were struggling to get involvement from their members, especially the younger ones. They’re fearful of what would happen to the union after they retire. Since that initial meeting we have reached out to their younger *and* experienced members to encourage, support them, and give them some fresh perspectives. After that meeting their union decided to start an apprentice program in which they would train their young members to become activists in their local union—similar to our Next Generation program.  They now have two young people doing this which offers some prospective board members.   Each year they host a dinner at a local restaurant for their members and families.  This year they invited us to come and enjoy the evening.  Their leadership requested that we address the group of nearly 150 LPNs, CNAs, County employees, etc. Donna, Gerald, and myself each took a turn sharing experiences and benefits of our local union. (*Editor’s note: Brandon won’t include it in here, but his impromptu speech was pretty impressive*).

 The results were overwhelmingly positive for both groups!  We were thanked by just about everyone and we plan to continue supporting them in their challenges. Opportunities like this allow both unions to prosper by sharing ideas, concepts and experiences. Thank you to following members who joined in the effort, Roger Tourangeau III, Toby Loehr, Mark Tryan, Donna Dams, Steve Golfis, Gary DuBord, Gary DuBord, Jr., Jason Hurkman, and Gerald Kell.

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***Multi-Craft Committee***

***Charles Way, 1st Vice President***

The company has stated that they will hire six Maintenance Mechanics and two E/I. This has been communicated via word of mouth and now through a letter from Mill Manager, Matt Archambeau.  They both slated the timeframe as “in the future” so only time will tell. The Company asked to reinstate the Multi-craft Committee and the names have been presented to each side. We are awaiting a time to convene to work out the details and then I believe the new people will be entering Maintenance.  
 The company has announced that Tour Oilers will be moving to day shift sometime in the near future. This will be a financial burden on these people, somewhere in the area of a 15% reduction of weekly pay. We are trying to work this out, but as it stands right now there will be no compensation for this move. The Day Oilers and Tour Oilers are pursuing other avenues to address the compensation issue. There have been meetings to ensure a smooth progression to day shift with more to come. Arbitrations from Maintenance will take place this fall. They both pertain to discipline.

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***Safety***

***Steve Benoit, President***

I’m taking this opportunity to let you know that we have a great group of Union Brothers and Sisters as representing and fighting for your safety in the mill. These dedicated people have taken issues to Central Safety and Safety Leadership to push for our protection. Recent accomplishments include a timeline for corrections to the digesters in the Kraft Mill, a repaired steam leak in the Pulp Dryer, getting a year-old work request completed on an E1 slabber and much more. I encourage you to reach out to one of these people so your concerns can be echoed. Thank you to each of these people for stepping up and making a difference:

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***Arbitration***

***Steve Benoit, President***

Through the Local we have agreed to take three grievances to arbitration. The arbitration process can take many months. One of our cases began in November and will not be taken to arbitration until August.

Naturally, the process starts with a grievance. Sometimes this may be a grievance in its first step or a termination at the third step per the contract (see Article 25 in the contract for the grievance processes and Article 26 for Discharge Questioned). If the first and second steps of a grievance are completed and no agreement can be reached, a grievance moves into third step. In Escanaba when we get to the third step the Union and Company meet. The Company will normally have the mill manager involved and the Union always brings in District Rep Sally Feistal to help present the case. After the third step meeting the Company will provide their answer and if the Union is not satisfied, we can either move into mediation or arbitration. The Company has said they have no interest in mediation.

Arbitration begins when the Union informs the Company that they would like to arbitrate the case and a panel of arbitrators is ordered for review. Once we receive the panel, each party begins to strike arbitrators and eventually they get down to one arbitrator that will hear the case. If either side does not like the panel that has been provided they can request an entirely new panel. Once an arbitrator is picked the date is scheduled.

On the day of arbitration each side is given the opportunity to present its case to the arbitrator just as you would to a judge in a court of law. Witnesses may be called and documents will be presented to support your case. A decision is not typically made immediately, when they do it’s binding. For more information on how arbitrations work go to www.mediate.com/articles/grant.cfm.

***From Darkness to Light***

***Steve Benoit, President***

This Easter I sat in church listening to the priest’s sermon and it struck me enough to share my thoughts. He spoke of an art exhibit called “Darkness into Light” by a woman named Judy Chicago. The exhibit takes art and shows the darkness of the Holocaust, the darkness and horrors that people went through only to take and show the light and hope that came from this horrific time in history. Below is an excerpt from Judy Chicago’s webpage www.judychicago.com.

“The Holocaust Project is…structured as a journey into the darkness of the Holocaust and out into the light of hope. It is based on the journey – intellectual, physical, and emotional – that Donald and I took…The exhibition and the book are structured around our belief that…confronting and trying to understand the Holocaust, as painful as that might be, can lead to a greatly expanded understanding of the world in which we live. Our hope is that this will contribute to a firm individual and collective commitment to take up the vast project of transforming ourselves and nurturing our humanity, thereby creating a more peaceful, equitable world.”

I need to be clear that in no way am I comparing what we are going through in Escanaba with anything like the Holocaust. I am merely using Judy Chicago’s idea that from darkness and difficult times you can find light and hope.

Let’s talk about some of the dark issues we have experienced. In just the last week the Company terminated two employees. They have had the audacity to unjustifiably accuse a member of committing fraud, not reporting an incident and I could go on. Sadly, these folks have been honest, respectful and followed the rules. We are fighting for both employees.

Another issue has been going on for almost a year. In May of 2015, the cooking method for the Kraft Mill digesters was changed causing the vessels to rock and roll dangerously. They are made to move but not to the point of loosening nuts from bolts, cracking lines or scaring the crap out of the people in the area who over many years have never experienced this. The issue had been brought to management several times only to fall on deaf ears. Recently, the Union Safety Group made management aware of a rumor about OSHA possibly being contacted. The Union again requested a detailed plan of how things would be fixed along with a timeline. This time, the Company agreed and a timeline was provided. This was only possible because of those that spoke up from the area and in the Safety Rep group.

Discrimination is always an ugly thing. It can be based on race, gender, religion, etc. but it is also ugly when it denies a work group advancement or move based on their department. The Company has unilaterally decided to bar any E&I or Maintenance from being considered for special assignment jobs because of understaffing and because they’re not permitted to utilize the folks on special assignments for downs per the contract. The contract states that members on a special assignment job cannot do bargained unit work unless agreed upon by the Union and Company (article 34 number 6). The Company has put us in this staffing mess and now wants to punish these members for it. I am very proud to be a member of this union because when this happened a group of people stepped up, filed grievances and made their voices heard.

We have been informed by the Company that they will implement their smoking ban after only allowing us to pass one proposal to them. We told them that we believe we have not been able to bargain over this and would like to set up additional dates to continue the bargaining only to be told we can talk but the Company will be implement the smoking policy June 1, 2016. It is nice to know that they want to bargain in good faith (sarcasm). As a union we have several methods available to help us in this situation and we will certainly utilize them.

You know I could go on and on from the no-shorts policy to not paying hours worked, bankruptcy to not the 401(k) match suspension, contracting out bargained work to well you know we could go on and on. My point is that when I heard this sermon I thought of all of my union brothers and sisters and realized WE ARE THE LIGHT. Each of these is a dark issue that we are trying to overcome as a union but we can only do this by members stepping up. It took a member speaking up, a group of members to speak louder by filing a grievance, and then our union as a whole to fight the darkness. From darkness comes light! Look around, you are a union member, the person working next to you is a union member and up the machine lines, in the Kraft Mill, Wood Yard, Water and Effluent, in the Yard there are union members. We are what makes this mill, we make the pulp, the paper, process the chemicals and chips, check the quality and ship to customers. We are Local 21 and we are the light in the darkness. Stand proud and stand strong because we can dispel the darkness, with our light!