



**LOCAL 2-21**

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# 21 NEWS

Editor: Steve Benoit

[WWW.USW2-21.COM](http://WWW.USW2-21.COM)

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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.

## Important Information & Events

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)  
([www.guidanceresources.com](http://www.guidanceresources.com))  
1-800-428-4650

### Retiree "Get Together"

First Wed. of each Month 10 am at the Union Hall

**Union Meeting:** March 11, 7pm - Dinner at 6pm  
*Nomination of Officers at this Meeting*

**Next Generation Meeting:** March 11, 5pm Union Hall

**Steward's Meeting:** March 25 -3:00pm

**Welfare Club Meeting:** Monday, March 9 at 7:00pm  
Mead Rod and Gun Club

**Total Benefit Solutions** will be at the Union hall  
Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am to  
4:00pm for Union Benefit questions and to help "soon  
to be retirees" investigate the insurance market  
place and answer questions on the union insurance.  
Call 1-877-265-2212 to set up an appointment.

### Committee Members

	Home	Work	Cell
President Ken Curtis .....			241-8417
1st Vice Chuck Way.....		233-2705	280-1698
2nd Vice Joe Curran .....		233-2511	420-3918
3rd Vice John Dubord .....		233-2782	280-1044
Insurance Steve Benoit.....	233-7126	233-2366	399-4195
Comp Mike Nantelle.....	786-9039	233-2655	399-0466
Secretary Brandon Stromberg.....		233-2714	284-1604
Treasurer Guy Trudell.....		233-2922	399-9143

Next Gen/Rapid Response.....Brandon Stromberg..233-2714 284-1604  
Hall Rentals .....Steve Kennedy . . . . . 789-1933



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[unitedsteelworkerslocal21@yahoo.com](mailto:unitedsteelworkerslocal21@yahoo.com)



[www.usw2-21.com](http://www.usw2-21.com)



<http://pacelocal21.proboards.com/>

## TIP OF THE ICEBERG

info: Ken Curtis, President

Since our last Newsletter went out, we have had a change of leadership here in Escanaba, with Matt Archambeau taking Roger Rouleau's place as mill manager. The Rapids mill and Luke have also seen replacements. Verso said they would make changes in leadership in the first 90 days, and they have. As of this writing, I have not met Matt yet. We have a meeting scheduled for Thursday March 5<sup>th</sup>. Not sure yet if that was an oversight on his Secretary's part, or if meeting with the three Locals (he will be meeting with the Teamsters, and IBEW that week as well) is really that low on the list. I guess we will see. Either way, it is telling.



This is only the tip of the iceberg here in Escanaba though. We are seeing a real uptick in discipline, and

flat out contract contesting. We expected some bravado, but I have to admit I am surprised by some of it. When the contract has a list of steps to follow in a disciplinary situation, and those steps are skipped (up to two at a time) one has to wonder if Verso Corporate is even aware of what is going on, or is this just the same old managers who

love to discipline and a new HR generalist who doesn't seem to know any other way, just flexing for the new boss. After all, in the meeting with Adam St.John, Dave Paterson and the rest, we did ask if they planned to just "flip a switch" and we all would just have to get used to it, or if they planned to clearly communicate their plans and discuss them. When I asked that, they looked at me as if I was crazy, and assured me that they would "never just flip a switch" and that everything had to be discussed and changed gradually. So, as you can see, I'm perplexed. I'm hoping the meeting with Matt will shed some light. Since I've been involved with this stuff, there has always been talk about the path forward, moving forward and so on. Rarely has that path been well lit. There has been talk about whole sale changes to our Safety Policies, and when it was pointed out to the mills safety manager that the changes needed further discussion before it goes to Safety Leadership, he said to take that up with Jeff Boulden and Matt Archambeau. So my question is: "why have a central safety committee if Jeff Boulden and Matt Archambeau are making decisions without consulting it?" There is a collaborative system between the Locals and the company that works. Why have it, or have a safety department head for that matter, if we are going to circumvent it with decisions made by the mill manager and the production manager?

This next Union meeting, you will be given the opportunity to run for a position on the committee. If you have ever felt like you had something to contribute, now is the time to step up and run. Every position will be a possible contest. Some of us will be staying, some of us are leaving. I am one of the

latter. I have honestly enjoyed my time serving this Local, and feel as though I have paid my debt to the Union. And it's time to make way for someone else. The current committee has so much spark and has achieved so much in their time there that you can be proud of each of them. I know I am. They are great people and there are many more just like them in our membership who will handle this committee through the times ahead with absolute strength and resolve. So if you are thinking you can lend a hand, get it together and get yourself nominated at the next Union meeting.



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## **FOLLOWING RULES WORK BOTH WAYS**

info: Joe Curran, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

It has become clear that the company is expecting us to follow the policies and safety rules moving forward and they are being told they will be held to that standard also. So it is time to start looking out for each other in every aspect; whether it be safety, general rules or contractually. It is our job to follow the things listed above and it is also our job to make sure supervisors follow them listed above. We all live under the same policies, rules and contract.

The company recently has taken a tougher stance on the misconduct rules in the contract and the Union plans on fighting it and doing whatever we must to enforce the red book. There was a few days dedicated to the misconduct rules during last negotiations and the violations listed are there for a reason. Without getting into more details, if you receive discipline for any reason or feel that any meeting could lead to discipline make sure you have Union representation with you at all times and if one is not available get on the phone with your committee ASAP! Remember they have the right to give you a lesser punishment if unusual and compelling mitigating factors are applicable but not more severe. The misconduct penalties are in the back of your contract on page 57; we should all get familiar with them.

### **MANY HANDS CREATE A LIGHT LOAD**

info: Brandon Stromberg, Rapid Response/Next Gen Coordinator

Over the last few months, I have heard unions called communists, cults, lazy, pimps, corrupt, thugs, greedy, and ungrateful. Do you feel like these words describe you? Recently, a governor in our nation was asked how he would fight the terror group ISIS. The governor responded, "If I can take on 100,000 protesters, I can do the same across the world." Who are those 100,000 protesters he was referring to? Union, non-union, men and women, like you and I, protesting right-to-work legislation in their state. I'm not going to dissect Governor Walker's comments, but I will discuss the misinformation stated and the blatant attacks on unions and their members. Is this thought process new? Here is a something interesting said by a former

German leader, "We must close union offices, confiscate their money and put their leaders in prison. We must reduce worker's salaries and take away their right to strike"-Adolf Hitler. It is evident this thought process has been around a long time. Now, I have not worked with every single person in our mill or every single union member in our state or country, but I don't believe any of the beginning statements are true. The men and women, who work at our mill and in our community, are quite the opposite. I have seen hardworking, caring, and generous individuals. Every year, you all donate thousands of dollars to the United Way. The United Way programs assist thousands of people in our community. Does that sound generous or greedy? Last year, you all donated your time, energy, and resources to the first ever "Strike for Hunger." We raised almost 1.59 tons of food and almost \$3,000. Was this effort put together by lazy or hard working people? Last summer I witnessed the Ironworkers local 8 work with labor groups, faith groups, and community leaders to build a steel cross



on Indian Point near Nahma. This cross is 20 feet high and 12 feet wide and a beautiful sight overlooking the water. Labor groups donate

thousands of dollars, and countless hours, every year to our community and do some incredible things! Be proud of that! We are

not without opposition though, and we have many challenges ahead of us. Take notice of what our brothers and sisters are going through in the oil refinery industry or the battle our members are fighting in Wisconsin. We are strong when our members are involved, educated, and united. I want to give a shout out to Gerald Kell. Gerry has really stepped up to the plate using his talents for the benefit of our local. I strongly encourage each and every one of you to consider becoming more involved; even as simple as an hour a month. Many hands create a light load. I'm ready to stand with each and every one of you. Are you ready to stand with me?

Here are some upcoming opportunities:

- March 11-Chilli Challenge.
- March 30-UPRLF meeting with state legislators. Please RSVP.
- June 5-7-2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Strike for Hunger.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday every month 5:00pm-Next Generation meeting.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday every month 7:00pm-Trades and Labor/Upper Peninsula Regional Labor Federation meeting.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday every month 3:00-Stewards meeting.



## HEALTH ASSESSMENT

info: Steve Benoit, Insurance Advocate

It is a new year and you are once again able to do your health assessment at [anthem.com](http://anthem.com). It is very important that you and your partner/spouse do your health assessment every year. With the health assessment if you are able to earn \$100.00 per person. That is \$200.00 toward your health care. You can complete this assessment by going to [anthem.com](http://anthem.com) and logging in under you and your partner/spouse. If you have questions about this assessment please contact me either in the union office or by phone at 399-4195.

## GRANDFATHERED/NONGRANDFATHERED COMPANY CONTRIBUTION

info: Steve Benoit, Insurance Advocate

All company contributions to your 401K Empower accounts should have been deposited within the last two months. Non-Grandfathered Employees should have seen the company contribution at the end of January and Grandfathered should have seen the match toward the middle of February. If you are questioning if you received yours you can go to [newpagebenefits.com](http://newpagebenefits.com) and go under the Pension and Retirement Tab, click on JP Morgan. If you need assistance with this please contact me in the Union Office and I will help you check on this.

If you retired during the 2014 year you will also see a company contribution to this account, be sure to go on [newpagebenefits.com](http://newpagebenefits.com) to check on this or call 1-866-310-6955. If you rolled your money over to another provider and want this money rolled over also you will need to

**Thinking about your retirement plans?**  
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contact Newpage Benefits to have this done. Again if you need help with this please contact me at 399-4195 and I can help you out with this.

### **WELFARE CLUB FOR ALL**

*info: Steve Benoit, Insurance Advocate*

This next month the Welfare Club will meet on Monday evening, March 9 at 7pm in the Mead Rod and Gun Club. This is a night where you can make a difference in your fellow union brother's or sister's lives by attending the meeting that helps pay for their health insurance while they are off. We are in need of active members to attend this meeting. The meeting is short but the fellowship is amazing. Come and make a difference and stay for the dinner and solidarity amongst active and retiree members.

### **WHAT DOES 2015 HOLD IN STORE FOR INVESTORS**

*info: Margaret Noreus, Edward Jones Financial Advisor*

If you're an investor, you probably had a pretty good year in 2014. But what's in store for 2015? What investment moves should you consider?

First, be aware that the investment environment seems fairly favorable. We're



seeing signs of improving economic growth and positive corporate earnings. So it may be a good

time to add quality stocks, especially if they can help you fill gaps in your investment portfolio.

Next, be prepared for rising interest rates. The Federal Reserve may raise short-term rates this year, but even before the Fed acts, long-term rates could rise. As a result, bond prices may fall. To respond to this possibility, consider building a ladder of short-, intermediate- and long term bonds. Such a ladder gives you the potential to redeem your maturing short-term bonds and reinvest them in the new, higher-paying bonds.

While you should make most of your investment decisions based on long-term considerations, it's always a good idea to be attuned to what's happening in the world around you-and to respond appropriately. -From Margaret Noreus, Your Edward Jones financial advisor located at 801 Ludington St. , Escanaba, MI 49829. Phone 789-2081. Member SIPC



### **CHILI CHALLENGE**

How is your grandmother's chili? I wonder if it tastes better than my wife's fiery hot inferno. How about Aunt Betty's 1,000 bean bombshell? Or Uncle Bobby Flay's red beef throw down. Whatever kind of chili you cook, fire up the crock pot!

Where: Union Hall

When: March 11, 2015 starting at 6:00pm.

Set-up: 5:30pm-6:00pm

Requirements: Sign-up, by email or phone, before March 11. Each participant will be required to make roughly 4-5 quarts of chili (an oval size crock pot). Each chili will be rated 1-5, 1 being the worst and 5 the best. The winners will be announced after the union meeting.

1<sup>st</sup> prize-\$50

2<sup>nd</sup> prize-USW T-shirt

3<sup>rd</sup> prize-USW hat

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