



3520 Unity News

MARCH 2009

NAFTA

+

CAFTA

=

THE ROYAL

SHAFT

*God bless the*

USA



# President's Message

## Eboard

President.....George Drexel  
 Vice President.....Jeff Hicks  
 Recording Secretary.....Tracy Nail  
 Financial Secretary.....Shayne Brown  
 Sergeant at Arms.....Todd Scott  
 Guide.....Ronnie Adcock  
 Trustee.....Steve Stroud  
 PDI Member at Large.....Mike Davis  
 Interim Shop Chair.....Steve Barber  
 Ford HVC Shop Chair.....David Hunter  
 Metaldyne Shop Chair.....Edward Pickard  
 Health and Safety.....David Carrigan  
 Health and Bennifits.....Michale Hicks  
 International Rep.....Dave Bortz  
 Region 8 Director.....Gary Casteel

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editor or the office of local 3520, but are those of the individual writers. Articles of interest submitted by Local 3520 members will be printed as space provides: however, they must bear the name of the writers. All articles are subject to approval of the editor and the Local President. Advertisements appearing in this publication do not necessarily constitute an endorsement by the local. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit or limit all articles submitted.

**Email Articles to:**

Lupachair@uawlocal3520.org

The deadline is posted on the website



**3520**  
UNITY NEWS

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

As communicated previously to the membership our plan is to generate a grassroots campaign for our Federal and State Elected Representatives so that they are aware of the job losses at our UAW Represented Freightliner facilities in NC. The job losses are NAFTA and economy driven. Our action plan included face to face meetings and a petition drive outlining the seriousness of the job losses.

We have accomplished just that, traveling to Raleigh and Washington, D.C. we met with our representatives and outlined the seriousness of our job loss as well as asking them to take specific actions to help us. We met with the following:

- U.S. Senator Kay Hagen (met with us in person)
- North Carolina Governor Bev Purdue (met with staff)
- U.S. Congressman Larry Kissel (met with staff)
- U.S. Congressman Mel Watts (met with us in person)
- U.S. Congresswoman Sue Myrick (met with us in person)

All offices gave a commitment to help. As they do what they committed to we will inform the membership.

Between the plants we delivered 4,400 signatures to our representatives. The Cleveland plant collected 2,400 signatures in one day, outstanding work by everyone that helped and signed.

It took a UNION to make all of this happen. Thank you to Shop Chair's Steve Barber, Dave Hunter and Edward Pickard for coordinating the petition drive in their respective plants and those that helped. Thanks to UAW Region 8 staff Jim Rogers that has assisted us in the entire process.

Most of all thank you to our membership for signing the petition and for simply being a union member. I appreciate that you do not sit on the sideline like many do and that you contribute your part to making the union possible.

We will continue to work diligently to make certain as many trucks are built in North Carolina as possible and I hope everyone will get an opportunity to come back to work sooner than later.

In Solidarity,

George Drexel

## “Piston Broke”

One day a truck driver was driving down a rural road when a loud bang came from under the hood of his new Mexican built truck. The truck stalled. After jumping out and looking under the hood, the driver found that a piston had broken.

An hour went by before a pickup full of unemployed truck builders happened on the scene. They pulled over and asked the driver what was wrong.

“Piston broke,” said the truck driver.

The men all looked at each other and said, “Jump in! We’re all pissed and broke too!”

## Steward tip for the week

### Handling Dues Complaints and Free Riders

There’s no getting around it: most members don’t like to pay dues. To many, dues are just another deduction from their paycheck, no different from federal or state or city taxes, no different than sales taxes or use taxes or any other tax. Of course, people who stop to think about it see that taxes pay for the highways they drive on and the police who protect them and the schools that educate their children. Taxes help assure that the water their families drink is pure and the food they buy at the market is safe to eat. But people don’t stop to

think about it, no more than as union members they consider how, without dues, there would be no lost-time pay for bargaining committee members, no funds for training, no lawyers to pursue arbitrations, no one to turn to when they’re unfairly docked or disciplined, no trained representatives to take their side when things get bad. They would be at the mercy of their employers – and an awful lot of employers show no mercy whatsoever.

## Member tip for the week

### Bargaining: Face-to-Face Negotiations

The collective bargaining process always includes face-to-face sessions, conducted in a fairly formal way. Notes are taken, for example, so the parties will have a record of what was said if a dispute later comes up over what did or didn’t happen during the talks. Depending on the type of union and the type and size of the bargaining unit, negotiations for the union will be done either by a single spokesman or by individual bargaining teams, with each addressing a specific area of concern. The bargainers present proposals and the facts, figures and arguments that justify them. Since the other side has proposals of its own, the sessions also include asking questions about what they’re proposing and why, and debating the facts and arguments.



“Do you, uh, have a dental plan?”

Get special discounts on wireless devices and save 10% on monthly service charges with AT&T



# Savings and Solidarity

- Fewest dropped calls.
- Unlimited mobile-to-mobile calling.
- Roll over your unused Anytime Minutes
- An Ideal plan for every family
- AT&T—only completely unionized wireless company



Visit [www.UnionPlus.org/ATT](http://www.UnionPlus.org/ATT)

\*The equipment and service discounts described in this ad are MCT available with the iPhone and associated wireless service.

©2007 AT&T

## “We didnt buy any land, or lay any brick”

On February 27th Daimler celebrated the opening of the new \$300 million dollar 1.3 million sqft. production facility in Saltilo, Mexico. The plant will produce Freightliner's new flagship, the Cascadia heavy-duty Class 8 truck.

The new plant can produce up to 30,000 trucks annually. This figure is based on 2 shifts at phase 1.

The Saltilo plant has the ability to expand to 3 shifts and change its structure to reflect a 10 hour work day. their contract provides for Sunday work without premium pay.

Entry pay for an assembler at the Saltillo plant is \$2.19. This is 33% lower than Santiago, the first Freightliner plant in Mexico.

---

## “Saltillo will build the over flow from cleveland”

“Cascadia orders beyond the capacity of Saltillo will be scheduled in Cleveland” according to a letter from Rodger Nielsen e-mailed to the Gazette. Daimler will shift new orders of Freightliner trucks from North Carolina to Mexico after mid-March, when the company is scheduled to lay off some 2,137 workers in Gaston and Rowan counties. Daimler spokeswoman Amy Sills confirmed the authenticity of the dealer letter from Nielsen. Read the full letter here:

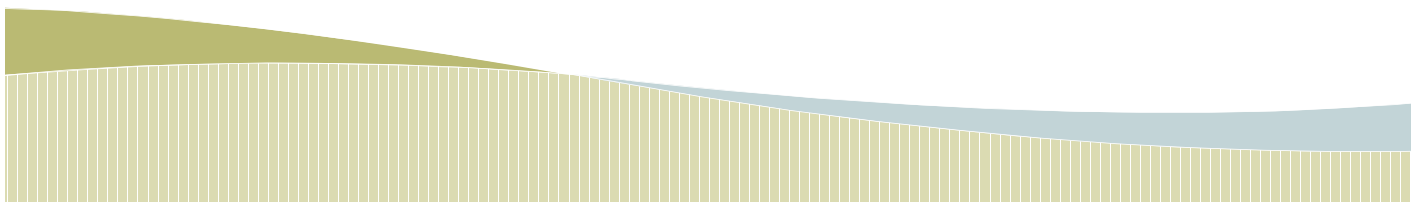
<http://local.gastongazette.com/pdf/freightliner.pdf>

---

## ***Communication is the key to success***

Below you will find the submitted reports from your elected officials.

These reports are continued on page 8



# ***American History 101***

It amazes me on a daily basis while talking to workers how they either don't know or how easily they forget the history of this great nation we all love. How they forget or either didn't know that if not for the workers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century fighting to form labor unions, we would not reap the rewards that we take for granted today.

We all assume that the pay and benefits that we earn or that we have earned since we joined the workforce were given freely by the company's that we have worked for, however history shows us that when workers started standing together is when the pay, benefits and working conditions began getting better for the American Blue Collar worker which we all are a part of. Even if you didn't work for a company where the workers stood together and formed unions to negotiate their benefits you were rewarded by those workers who did and the efforts of those that went before us. Companies would match as much as possible what union facilities made just to keep the unions out of their facilities. What the workers failed to understand was that they were still being treated unfairly because of this. There is an old saying; "Learn history or you are doomed to repeat it." I think that is what is happening to the workers in this country. We have reaped for years the benefits of those who were ***strong enough*** to stand together and now it is our turn, but we are a generation of ***strong bodies and weak minds***. We believe that the things we have will not be taken away. I was taught a long time ago that anything worth having is worth fighting for, well my job is worth having and that it is worth fighting for.

It is time for this generation to make our own history. Are we going to be the generation that let down all those that went before us, who were willing to fight and even die to get what they deserved for them and their families, or are we going to be the generation that rolls over and cowers in the corner willing to take anything that is tossed our way, while our jobs are going to Mexico, China or other low wage nations. In North Carolina alone over 70,000 jobs have went the way of Mexico due to NAFTA. People say unions shut factories down and we lost 70,000 jobs in North Carolina that were not Union jobs. Maybe if those workers had stood together and formed a union and negotiated a contract they would have at least gotten more than a pink slip when their company moved the work to Mexico simply for cheaper labor.

Now is the time for all workers at Cleveland to make the decision; do we stand together and reap the rewards together, or do we stand divided and lose everything we have worked hard to have. (Homes, cars, livelihoods.)

UNITED WE BARGAIN DIVIDED WE BEG You decide if you want to bargain or beg!!!

Kevin D Barnett, Education L.U.D.L.

***Proverbs 12:15 (NIV)***

***The way of a fool seems right to him,  
but a wise man listens to advice.***



## DID YOU KNOW?

That every employee who will be affected by the layoff on March 13<sup>th</sup> will receive their health insurance paid for six months after their separation through COBRA? ***This is a Union Negotiated Benefit*** and was not available prior to the union coming to Cleveland Freightliner.

**What is COBRA?** The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) requires most employers with group health plans to offer employees the opportunity to continue temporarily their group health care coverage under their employer's plan if their coverage otherwise would cease due to termination, layoff, or other change in employment status (referred to as "qualifying events").

### ***Did you know?***

#### **COBRA premiums often more than income from unemployment benefits**

According to a report, *Squeezed! Caught between unemployment benefits and health care*, released Friday, most unemployed people are unable to maintain their health insurance because it is too expensive under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, or COBRA as it more widely known as.

The 1985 federal mandate calls for employers to allow former workers continued coverage for up to 18 months after they have separated from the company. The requirement is for companies with 20 or more employees and that offer group plans, such as medical.

The financial burden of COBRA comes, however, when the former employee has to pick up 100 percent of the health care premium, where the employer was subsidizing a portion of it. The premium for COBRA insurance could be as much as \$1,000 per month.

<http://www.chicagodefender.com/article-2986-cobra-premiums-often.html>

Under our contract agreement the company will pay the COBRA premiums for the first six months of separation. (Health Benefits page 115-116 Contract)

**3. Company paid health care benefits will be continued for six (6) months to laid off employees with one (1) year of seniority.**

***If you have any other questions you would like to ask about the union please feel free to contact the local union at the local union office or you send your question by e-mail to:***

***[educationcommittee@uawlocal3520.org](mailto:educationcommittee@uawlocal3520.org) and we will get an answer to you as soon as possible.***

***Education Committee***



# **The Truth About NAFTA**

## **NAFTA Has Destroyed Manufacturing In The U.S. and Caused The Nation's Best Companies To Leave**

Imagine that Congress enacted for the state of California alone a special law that:

Dropped the minimum wage to \$0.50/hour

Exempted employers from child labor laws

Expanded the work week

Reduced health and work place safety laws

Banned unions

Gave California exporters full, duty-free access to the rest of the states

**Wouldn't That Be Ridiculous? Well That Is Exactly What NAFTA Did For Mexico To The Detriment Of The Entire United States; No U.S. Manufacturing Can Compete With Those Conditions.**

**The Future and Fate of Our Country Depend on The Immediate Resolution of This Issue:**

***NAFTA: It Must Be Amended-  
Or Eliminated.***



# **Standing Committee Spotlight**

## Constitution and Bylaws ~ Debra Koonts, Chair

The bylaws of each local union, with the UAW Constitution, set out the rules by which the local operates. In a new local, the work of this committee sets the stage for how the local will function. But, even well established locals may need to modify or amend their bylaws.

Members of this committee are responsible for submitting original and/or amended bylaws provisions to the local union membership for discussion and approval. This committee monitors the required local union bylaws amendment procedure to ensure compliance with the current bylaws and constitutional provisions.

Once the amended bylaws provision(s) has been approved by the local union membership, this committee monitors the process to ensure that the amendment is immediately submitted to the International Executive Board pursuant to Article 37, Section 3 of the Constitution. Join this committee to strengthen your local union's bylaws and structure.

---

Continued from page 4

## ***Communication is the key to success***

Do you ever wonder why we are asked to call our representatives over and over?

I guess it is to make sure they are doing their jobs, RIGHT?

So what is their jobs? To do what you asked of them? To uphold what they said they would do? To uphold the rules and laws?

Have you ever wondered what the jobs of our elected officials at the local are? What are they suppose to do? Do you think they do a good job of doing their job? YOU and I have "standard work" to follow while on the shop floor, shouldn't they have a "standard work" also?

They do. Its in the Constitution of the UAW, the By-Laws of the local and also posted on our website.

Everyone says communication is such an issue, but yet who is pushing that issue to try and get it corrected? Who is calling their union representatives to make sure they are doing their jobs?

You should contact them and tell them what you expect.

According to the by-laws which are on file with the Department of Labor, Article 3

says the object of this local is:

"To improve working conditions and to establish a wage in accordance with need and desires of its memberships. To unite in one organization regardless of religion, race, creed, color, sex, or nationality, *and to educate our membership in the history of the American labor movement and to develop and maintain an intelligent and dignified membership.*"

So I ask YOU, without communication from your elected officials, HOW do you become educated in our operations as a local, without feedback from OUR elected officials?

What prompted me to write this is the lack of communication to the membership. One year after our local was formed, I almost dropped out. Like many of you, I was tired of not knowing what is going on.. I chose not to drop out and become more active. Communications has always been a big deal to me. In high school I use to write a newsletter that seemed to work great to get the word out , so I decided maybe that's what we should have here.

This began the creation of 3520 Unity News (thanks to Jeff Hicks for the name) It was designed to be a monthly publication to keep you informed of the activities within our local.

It is becoming increasingly more difficult over time to get the information from our elected officials to print in the newsletter to bring awareness of our activities to YOU, the members.

All you have to do is look back and see who has done what within this local. Who is really dedicated to helping this membership become educated and grow. These are the people who need to be in office.

As with our state and local leadership, WE vote them in, and when they don't do a good job, WE vote them out! If they do a good job WE re-elect them!

Election time is quickly approaching for this local! Do you want a repeat of the last 3 years or are you ready to GROW?

*Disclaimer: I am NOT refering to all elected positions. Only the ones who do nothing!*

*This is NOT a campaign for me for office, I will NOT be running for any elected position due to the layoff!*

*Please dont VOTE based on what you have heard about someone, as we all know the rummor mill is alive and well at CTMP. VOTE on their actions, and what they have done for YOU and ME, THE MEMBERSHIP!*