



International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
District Lodge 66
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Union Herald Article from the desk of:



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The war on the ACA

It appears that for the time being, the members of our US Congress seeking to do away with the Affordable Care Act (also known commonly as “Obamacare”) have failed. Even with a Republican Majority in both the Senate and House, the Republicans couldn’t get enough of a consensus to get more than 50% of either branch of Congress. Some Republicans thought the changes weren’t enough, where some thought it went too far. The far-right republicans wanted to take away the mandate for insurance companies to include preventive care, and prenatal care coverage. This would have caused the moderates to change their vote to a NO.

There is no doubt that the ACA needs some changes. The exchanges are failing. There are counties where there are zero available plans on the exchange. A full repeal of the ACA is not the way to go, but until someone comes up with a viable plan to make some change that makes sense, we are stuck where we are at.

Midwest Territory Staff Conference

IAM members from Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and Michigan came to Kansas City for a Midwest

Territory Staff Conference the week of April 3-7, 2017. Overall, there were more than 200 individual members including Local Lodge Presidents, Vice Presidents, Recording Secretaries, Treasurers, Business Representatives, Grand Lodge Representatives, and many more.

Representing Locals 21, 2191, 1115, 1030, 1771, and District 66 were Brad King, Dale Borreson, Ernie Domnie, Scott Morgan, Jana Kirch, and Dennis Gerke (Included in the photo below in order). I was also at this conference (taking this picture)



There were many subjects discussed at this conference including Organizing for the future, Right to Work, Dues Structure, Community Service, NLRB, and Servicing our Members.

Organizing for the Future: If the Union Movement does not grow, it will die. This has been the theme for Unions for many years. With work moving overseas and layoffs galore, Unions cannot survive if their density continues to decline. We as members of unions need to take a look at organizing those that need it. Non-Members these days don't see the value of a Union. They don't see the better wages, pension, health care, and job security that we have all become complacent with.

When a new employee at our Union shop goes through orientation, and they are in their first weeks, how welcoming are we to this new member? Where did this new member work before applying for a job in one of our shops? What were the working conditions like there? Is that an opportunity to organize a new shop and make people's lives better? Do they still have friends that work there that we can talk to? These are questions that we should be asking. The Union movement has unfortunately become elitist. There are more people outside our local lodges that need our help in improving their lives. When we grow in density as a union, we become stronger.

Right to work: Most of our shops here in the area fall under the Right to Work laws here in Wisconsin and Iowa. Organizing should be taking place not only outside of our shops, but inside as well. When we don't have 95% membership rate within our shop, we lose the power we should have as a unified body. We need to be diligent in talking to

our non-members within our shops about the benefits of belonging to a union, and the problems we face when people within our own shop do not belong to the union.

Community Service: We as union members care about the community. We take part in events throughout the year that help the community. We are not as good as we should be when it comes to visibility. When we are outside of the shop cleaning a park, helping the elderly, building a handicap ramp, or painting a community center, we need to “toot our own horn”. The community needs to know that a union can do more than just take care of it’s own members.



Servicing our members: While servicing our members is 90 percent of what I do every day, it isn’t as visible as it should be. I handle grievances, pensions, and negotiations on a regular basis. It keeps me quite busy. I have 15 collective bargaining agreements that I oversee, and 5 local lodges. What I have failed to do is make myself visible to our members. I attend local lodge and district delegate meetings regularly. I don’t always make it into the shops I represent to talk to the members. I have concentrated more on the work aspect of my job, and less on the who or what is the union aspect of my job. As such, I will be looking to make semi-regular visits to the shops I represent.

Workers Memorial Day 2017

Just a reminder that Workers Memorial Day is on April 28 this year. Please feel free to join the AFL-CIO for this event honoring our fallen workers, and reminding us the struggles are not over in demanding a safer work place for our members, and non-members. OSHA is a good thing for our working class, but employers still ignore OSHA’s standards. Employees in both Union, and Non-Union shops are still afraid to report safety violations of these employers fearing retaliation. On this day, we need to remember our fallen workers, and continue the fight going forward to maintain, and reinforce workplace safety.

The nearest Workers Memorial Day event is at Green Island Park - 2312 7th St S. The event begins at 5pm on April 28.

LePinske Appointed Midwest Territory Special Representative

IAM International President Bob Martinez has announced the appointment of IAM Mechanics Local 701 Business Representative and Organizer Bill LePinske to the position of Midwest Territory Special Representative.

“On behalf of the Midwest Territory members and staff, I’d like to congratulate Bill LePinske on his appointment and welcome him to the Midwest Territory staff,” said General Vice President Philip J. Gruber. “LePinske, a longtime IAM member, has been

instrumental in organizing and servicing our members in the automotive and trucking industry throughout the Chicago area for many years. He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Territory and we look forward to working with him to grow our great union.”

LePinske initiated into IAM Mechanics Local 701, Carol Stream, IL in 2001 when he helped organize the Joliet Dodge shop where he was working. He served as Shop Steward before being appointed to the position of organizer in 2011, and then to the position of Business Representative in May 2014. LePinske has also served as a delegate to the 2012 and 2016 IAM Grand Lodge Conventions, the Illinois State Council of Machinists and the Chicago Federation of Labor.

His appointment is effective April 1.

District Lodge 66

The District Delegates gathered for our regular monthly meeting on Monday March 20, 2017. Along with the regular business of the Lodge, the Delegates made motions and passed the expenditure of \$60.00 to the La Crosse Fire Department to support their “Fire Pup” educational Program. Several items were tabled until the April meeting.

Nominations were held at all local lodge meetings for the election of Directing Business Representative for District Lodge 66. Neil Kamrowski was nominated out of all lodges, and I will continue to serve as DBR for another term.

The Scholarship Committee read and chose the winners of the 2017 District Lodge 66 Scholarship Award. The winning essays will be included within this Union Herald.

Also in District Lodge 66: Members of Lodge 1115 along with myself negotiated and ratified a new Collective Bargaining Agreement with Crown Cork and Seal. This agreement was ratified on March 30th. Members of Lodge 1115, and newly organized members of Lodge 1115 have also negotiated and ratified a contract with AECOM and Accent Controls out at Fort McCoy. This Collective Bargaining Agreement along with the Crown Cork and Seal Agreement took effect on April 1st.

In the future in District Lodge 66: Negotiations are set to take place between Choctaw Defense Systems, Peerless Chain, MTNT, Bearing Sea Environmental, Onopa, and Kaiyuh. Needless to say, this will keep me quite busy. We will work to complete these negotiations over the next few months to make the lives of our members better for the future.