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Business Manager's Report

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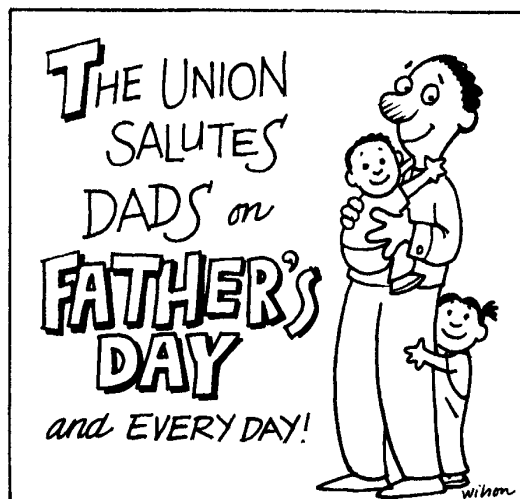
Welcome to spring. It has been a few years since we even had a spring. In fact we have had very cold springs, above normal winters and below normal summers for the last two years. When the tornado sirens went off last week, it was the first time since the summer of 2007 for the Green Bay area. The weather plays a much bigger role in our work than we give it credit. Above normal winters and the frost, nowhere as deep, leaves the gas mains intact as well as sales low. Below normal summer temperatures put much less stress on power production and transformers and again lower revenue. Below normal amount of storms is a good thing except for staffing levels, when those are based on the norm. This year's summer weather, if it is normal, will seem bad because of the assumptions from the previous years.

As we head for summer it brings us to vacation and time with friends and family or work on the house. All of these things bring us pleasure and at the same time even though many of the members work day to day with about the most dangerous commodities around, we need to apply all we've learned about safety so in the end we can say how great the summer of 2010 was.

We have been working through issues with furlough time and job abandonment and at the end of April and May, we will wish 50 plus members a happy retirement from voluntary severance. I'm sure that with the vacation time

peak that there will be issues with furlough and staffing levels. When we were negotiating furloughs it was suggested that we handle the time reporting as we do for union work (PTU) which keeps your benefits whole and this has been agreed to. This means that your pension and ESOP will be normal. This caused a minor glitch for those members who took furlough time in March, with the quarterly statement not reflecting that ESOP. That amount has been added back into your account and will be on your June statement. Job Abandonment has moved along as smooth as possible with only a couple of members still in the process. This is a major impact on the Members and their families with a few relocating while others have a longer commute, learning a new job and no longer working with the same work group. I know they will be welcomed into the new groups and form new friendships because the members of Local 310 take care of their own. Retirements in this number at one time is difficult because of all the wisdom and expertise that is walking out the door. But we work our entire career for this day when we will be free to pursue other adventures of our choice and I truly wish these members a very long and happy retirement (with great benefits).

(See **Business Manager's Report** on page 2)



A History Lesson on Cesar Chavez

Cesar Estrada Chavez born in 1927 in Yuma, AZ. To a migrant worker family, began working in the fields at age 10, picking every crop possible in southern California and Arizona. He left school in the eighth grade and was a U.S. Navy veteran of WW II. While in his 20s, he worked for the Community Service Organization founded by Saul Alinsky, becoming Director in 1958. He started organizing farm workers in 1962, forming the National Farm Workers Association; later, he established the first successful union of farm workers in U.S. history, the United Farm Workers Union of America (UFW). Chavez advocated fasts, pickets, and marches to bring attention to farm workers' strikes. As UFW president, he led a five-year strike-boycott against California wine-grape growers, enlisting nationwide support from millions of Americans. The successful

boycott led to binding contracts with the major grape growers. In 1972, the UFW became a member of the AFL-CIO.

The UFW during Chavez's tenure was committed to restricting immigration. The opposition stemmed from their belief that the program undermined US workers and exploited the migrant workers. In 1973, the UFW was one of the first labor unions to oppose proposed employer sanctions that would have prohibited hiring undocumented immigrants. In 1969, Chavez and members of the UFW marched through the Imperial and Coachella Valleys to the border of Mexico to protest growers' use of undocumented immigrants as strikebreakers. Joining him on the march were both Reverend Ralph Abernathy and US Senator Walter Mondale. In its early years, Chavez and the UFW went so far as to report undocumented immigrants who served as strikebreaking replacement workers, as well as those

Business Manager's Report

(Continued from page 1)

The issues with Matrix, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois, Broadspire and Medco have gone down considerably but some still exist. Many of you heard about ambulance services that are not in-network but this makes no difference because in an emergency in-network rates apply. We are having a continual problem with our eyeglass benefit with a number of you being denied this benefit because it was changed to a rolling 24 month sum. As of now over half of the Executive Board has been left holding the bag for the \$225.00. The benefit is clear that on January 1, 2010 each WPS member and dependent has \$225.00 in the account to use for glasses, contacts and eyewear as well as Lasik type surgery. Please contact the Union office if you have had a bill unpaid. Matrix is very simple; if you are off from work for more than 5 days you must contact them. Just as you in the past gave your Leader a WPS return to work form you now must give Matrix the form. You may be required to have a return to work form for an absence over five days. This hoop is easy to jump through at any clinic care service and runs our cost and the Companies cost up as any doctor you go to will sign this form without question. Workers Compensation is a very complex issue but if you are injured on the job immediately fill out the appropriate injury report and seek medical attention. This also raises your cost and the Companies cost but it will be denied if you don't. It will also

be denied if you do because that is how Broadspire works.

The largest use of resources at Local 310 has been at the Weston Power Plant. A concerted effort is underway to resolve a number of these issues and stop both groups from poking a finger in each other's eye daily. There may be Management and Members who would like this to remain the same and these people could become collateral damage if they stand in the way. Power Plant District Director Dessell and Rick Alexander our working to change processes and improve relations at Weston. This atmosphere has existed for many years and it must come to an end now.

Another chapter in Rebuilding Together of Greater Green Bay is in the books. I am in awe when I see a diverse group gather together to help a total stranger and make a huge difference in everyone involved lives. For the most part 5 hours on Saturday and 4 hours on Monday and the job were done. The job was new windows and vinyl siding with painting the trim and gutters. So many employees, spouses and young adults as well as the home owner and her daughter did a fantastic job and then came the landscaping crew on Thursday led by Tom Goral and again this house was transformed. My personal thank you to the 50+ volunteers. Giving back to our communities makes a difference for years to come.

Steve McFarlane

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The editor reserves the right to reject or edit any article. Articles containing vulgarity, slanderous statements or do not conform to normal ethical and moral standards will not be printed. Articles may be typed or written legibly with the senders name, phone number and signature. Names may be withheld upon request.

Member of the Midwest
Labor Press Association

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Texas Textbook Actions Make Wisconsin Law A 'Beacon'

Wisconsin's passage of the Labor History in the Schools law last year set a progressive standard for the entire nation. It stands as a beacon of light in the face of dark actions taken during March by the Texas Board of Education.

The Wisconsin Labor History Society is dedicated to assuring that the promise offered by the new law not be lost, and is taking several actions to implement the law. Wisconsin unionists can play a role in urging local schools to study labor history.

Led by far-right ideologues, the Texas State Board of Education recently gave preliminary approval to a plan that would radically change what children across the country learn in history class.

The ultra-conservative majority on the board took the curricula proposed by teachers and made over a hundred changes to "correct" the perceived left-wing bias.

Since Texas is one of the largest textbook markets in the country, material written to cater to the Texas curricula will find its way into textbooks across the country unless textbook publishers take a stand.

Children who use textbooks conforming to the new standards will not learn anything about the political philosophy of Thomas Jefferson or his thoughts on the separation of church and state. When they learn about the Civil War, they'll have to study Jefferson Davis' inaugural address alongside Abraham Lincoln's. And when they study the civil rights movement they'll have to learn about the "unintended consequences" of Great Society programs, affirmative action and Title IX.

Obviously any references to organized labor will be given an unfair slant as well.

What's happening in Texas makes our actions in Wisconsin even more important, since the Badger State can lead the way for honest, straight forward presentations of history.

Wisconsin Labor History Society Newsletter
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Cesar Chavez

who refused to unionize, to the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

In 1973, the United Farm Workers set up a "wet line" along the United States-Mexico border to prevent Mexican immigrants from entering the United States illegally and potentially undermining the UFW's unionization efforts.

Chavez renewed efforts to unionize all California vegetable pickers, but a dispute with the International Brotherhood of

Teamsters led to the loss of UFW membership. His leadership and principles of non-violence in the tradition of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi, prompted Senator Robert Kennedy to call Chavez "one of the heroic figures of our time."

Cesar Chavez died of natural causes in 1993 and was honored posthumously in 1994 with the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Higher Costs for Higher Learning

As a parent or grandparent, have you thought about how to help pay for school? Did you know that the costs are increasing significantly faster than inflation? There are many programs available for education planning, each with its own tax and control benefits. Let us help you discover which are best for your situation. For over five years, we have been helping many of our Union Brothers and Sisters understand how these types of opportunities could benefit them. Call us at the number below to schedule a no cost, no obligation meeting.

Joe Fenlon
Senior Financial
Services Representative
District Vice-President



Rich Kreitz
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1-800-323-5506 Ext 122

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President's Report

The Baltimore Orioles have returned to the bird feeder. What a great sign that warmer temps are on the way. I tell the grand kids that orioles are orange because they eat so many oranges. From their looks, I'm not sure they are buying it. We also had a visit from a peliated wood pecker. For those of you old enough to remember, this was the cartoon character "Woody Wood Pecker". As pretty as this bird is, I was amazed at how big it is and how noisy.

Furloughs

Good news was reported at the Local 310 Executive Board meeting that furlough time will not affect retirement and stock benefits. What this means is that even though time spent away from work on furlough is unpaid, retirement and stock benefits will be calculated on the straight time amount you would have earned had you been working. Just a year ago, we were facing the possibility of lay offs. Today we can say we have avoided a layoff and the furlough option will not have an affect on benefits. The news is getting better each day.

Larry Weyers

Larry Weyers has retired and will hopefully enjoy a relaxing life with his wife Lois and their family. Larry led WPS and then Integrys through an unprecedented growth period that saw WPS change from a local utility to a national corporation. Through it all, Larry remained true to his core beliefs and always kept a watchful eye on the treatment of all the employees. He was especially concerned about the employees in the sale of the Kewaunee nuclear plant and made that a significant part of the transaction. Larry understood the value of labor and was fair and generous in his dealings with Local 310 as well as other unions. He truly had an open door policy and I can say he always made time for me. Although I wish Larry and Lois the best, I will miss Larry's leadership. Thank-you Larry.

Officer Elections

Officer elections are upon us once again. The positions of Business Manager, President, Vice President, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Recording Secretary, District Director (4 positions), Trustee (3 positions), Auditor (3 positions), Guard and Conductor will all start new 3 year terms in September. To be included on the ballot, Members must meet certain criteria as outlined in the International Constitution and the Local 310 Bylaws. Perspective candidates should review these requirements.

The election process starts with the nomination to office. Section 4.03 of the Local 310 Policy Manual states that official officer nominations take place at the General Membership meeting in June of election years. Since this is an officer election year, a General Membership meeting has been

scheduled for June 15th in Cecil. Dinner will be provided at 6pm with the meeting to follow starting at 7pm. Nominations will be accepted at that meeting and then nominations will be closed after which no further nominations will be accepted. Following that action, Recording Secretary Lori Wunsch will read all the nominations.

Section 9.01 of the Local 310 Policy Manual also allows for nominations at the May District and Branch Meetings in election years. To accommodate this requirement, each District has scheduled a meeting in May. Nominations for office made at the District meetings must either be forwarded to the Recording Secretary or introduced from the floor at the General Membership meeting in June. Any nomination made at a May District meeting that is received by the Recording Secretary prior to the close of nominations will be included in the nominations read at the General Membership meeting in June.

Section 4.03 of the Local 310 Policy Manual further states that the Recording Secretary shall report the Members accepting nomination including the nominated office as part of the minutes to be read at all District and Branch meetings. To meet this requirement, Section 9.01 of the Local 310 Policy Manual states that the Districts are to hold a meeting in the month of July of election years.

So, what does all this mean? Official nominations are only made at the June General Membership meeting. Nominations can be made at the May District and Branch meetings, but to be official, they must be sent to the Recording Secretary prior to the June meeting or introduced from the floor at that meeting by any member. Including any nominations made at the May meetings in the meeting minutes will satisfy the notification requirement provided the Recording Secretary receives those minutes prior to the close of nominations at the June General Membership meeting. The District Directors shall also ensure that nominations made at their respective District and Branch meetings in May are included in the nominations identified at the General Membership meeting in June.

Actual voting will occur in August with a ballot sent to your mailing address on file. Only initiated members in good standing will receive a ballot. Please ensure your mailing address is current by contacting the Local 310 office.

Wrap Up

Congratulations to the Green Bay Gamblers for winning the Clark Cup. To win a 5 game series after losing the first two games at home is a great testimony to never giving up. We have all faced adversity this past year and can take a lesson from these young people that no matter what life tosses at us, we must always find a way to overcome.

Greg Veith

Too often we give children answers to remember rather than problems to solve.

Roger Lewin

It's good to have a comfort zone, but you also have to push yourself.

Kathleen Brown

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Court Gives Green Flag to Huge Sex-Bias Suit Against Wal-Mart

A federal appeals court has given the go-ahead to a class action sex discrimination suit by as many as 1 million women who have worked at Wal-Mart since 2001. The case could eventually include as many as 2.5 million plaintiffs and cost Wal-Mart billions of dollars in back pay and damages, the womens' lawyers say.

The suit is the biggest employment discrimination case in the nation's history.

The notoriously anti-union Wal-Mart is accused of paying women on salary and those earning hourly wages less than men for the same jobs and giving them fewer promotions.

While 65 percent of Wal-Mart's hourly employees were women, only 33 percent of the company's managers were, records show.

The lawsuit was filed in 2001 by six women.

Experts hired by attorney Brad Seligman said research of Wal-Mart's salary and personnel data on a regional basis showed that women were paid less than men in every region and the pay disparity existed in most job categories. It also

took women longer to enter management than men.

Company lawyers say there's no pay disparity between the sexes at most of its stores and managers make subjective salary and promotion decisions at the store level. Forcing the company to defend those decisions on a group basis was a denial of Wal-Mart's right to due process, they argued.

The ruling was the third time a court has said women can sue Wal-Mart as a group.

Class status makes it easier for the group to finance the litigation than if the women proceeded individually. It also gives the women more leverage to negotiate a settlement. A federal judge decided in 2004 that the experiences of the six original plaintiffs may be common to other current and former workers and certified the case as a class action.

Wal-Mart said it would contest the Appeal's Court's 6-5 decision. It could take the Supreme Court months to decide whether to hear the appeal.

UCS News Service

It is easier to do a job right than to explain why you didn't.

Martin Van Buren

A man is known by the company he keeps, and also by the company from which he is kept out.

Grover Cleveland

Just because things are not going perfectly does not mean they are not going well.

Al Groh

Clutter is the same thing as junk. It just has a home.

Unknown

Recovery Act Uses Stimulus Money to Cut Taxes

Over these two years, Wisconsin will receive approximately \$13 billion in federal stimulus investment. Over \$5 billion is in tax cuts for every individual, family and most businesses. Who in Wisconsin is getting these tax cuts? Everyone.

Through the Making Work Pay Credit Program, each of Wisconsin's 2.2 million families is receiving an average \$506 tax cut in 2009-2010 which would pay for a month's worth of groceries.

Through the Child Tax Credit, the families of 279,000 children will save \$230.7 million, receiving a higher tax break for each child living in the home.

Through the American Opportunity Tax Credit, over 160,000 families of college students will save \$217.4 million with a larger tax cut for tuition and other college and technical school expenses lasting up to four years.

Through the suspension of taxation of unemployment benefits, there are 441,000 unemployed persons who will get a \$250 federal refundable tax cut as well as a state tax cut—a \$73.4 million boost to people who lost their jobs because of the banks meltdown. This could pay for heating bills in February and March.

Through the deduction for sales tax on automobile purchases, households purchasing a new car can deduct the sales tax for the purchase price (up to a vehicle cost of \$49,500) from their federal income tax. This is a total tax cut of \$25.5 million.

Families can also claim tax cuts for energy conservation investments in their home or for household transportation, up to \$1,500 per household.

Through economic recovery payments to retirees, \$250 checks went to over one million people who are retired or disabled and whose sole source of income is Social Security, SSI, Railroad pensions and Veterans benefits. For seniors, this would cover the cost of Medicare Drug Premiums for six months. This aid totaled \$267 million for retired veterans, senior citizens and people with serious disabilities.

Through a number of business tax breaks, Wisconsin business owners are getting a \$561 million federal tax cut through 2010.

The federal government is the ultimate safety net to keep the economy from collapsing, and these tax breaks are an important part of that protection.

Wisconsin State AFL-CIO

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How's That 'Buy American' Thing Working Out on Wind Energy?

"Renewables" are the cornerstone of America's energy security policy: primarily solar and wind. America's competitors can't hijack our wind, right? Well, no. But you need windmills to make electricity from wind. And, who's cornered the market on windmill equipment?

As Russ Choma of the Investigative reporting Workshop at American University's School of Communications points out, even though modern wind turbines were invented and perfected in America, the economic impact from the \$2 billion in "smart grid" energy stimulus funds from the federal government is largely going to companies and workers overseas.

There are two American companies with a considerable market share in windmills: General Electric and Clipper, a subsidiary of United Technologies. Together, these forms account for 30 percent of the world market and nearly half of the U.S. market. However, GE imports most components from three of its plants in China and is in the process of opening another in Vietnam. It does operate turbine plants in Greenville, SC, Pensacola, FL and Tehachapi, CA.

Clipper has a plant in Cedar Rapids, IA, but also imports components from Germany, the Netherlands and Brazil.

Ironically, the two foreign owned companies—Gamesa of Spain, and Vestas of Denmark—are producing the most "All American" wind turbines on the market today, according to the AU report.

As Choma points out in a thoroughly researched piece appearing on the Workshop's website, Gamesa is the only company producing all three key windmill components in the U.S.—turbines, blades and towers.

Vestas has a blade factory in Colorado and is in the process of opening up new facilities for blades and towers. Ultimately, the company projects a U.S. employment of some 2,300 workers.

Here's what the AU investigative team found:

Acciona, (Spain) which installed 136 turbines under the grant program, has a turbine assembly facility in West Branch, Iowa. Lured to Iowa with \$4.8 million in incentives, the Spanish company opened its only U.S. facility in 2008. The plant employed roughly 150 workers with the average worker making about \$15 an hour, but earlier this year laid off about one-third of its workers and battled rumors the facility was to shut down.

Mitsubishi Power Systems (Japan) installed 382 turbines under the grant program, but Mitsubishi has no U.S.

manufacturing. Under the manufacturing tax credit program announced on Jan. 8, the Japanese industrial giant will receive \$5.1 million in credits if it opens a proposed facility in Fort Smith, AR. Workers at the \$100 million facility will assemble imported components. A patent dispute with General Electric held up the project, but a Jan 9 ruling by the U.S. International Trade Commission in favor of Mitsubishi has allowed planning to continue.

Nordex (Germany) responsible for 25 turbines under the grant program, has no U.S. manufacturing. Under the manufacturing tax credit program, Nordex has qualified for \$22.1 million in credits to help build a factory in Jonesboro, AR. The company promised to create 700 full-time jobs with an average pay of \$17 an hour in exchange for \$100 million in financing by the Jonesboro City Council and several million dollars worth of site improvements.

Siemens Energy (Germany) installed 79 turbines under the grant program. This German conglomerate, which makes everything from telephones to trains to ultrasound machines, has a blade factory in Fort Madison, Iowa. Siemens was lured to Fort Madison by about \$5 million in incentives and the facility employs about 260 workers. Siemens received \$7.7 million in tax credits on Jan. 9 to help with the construction of two proposed facilities, a nacelles assembly plant in Hutchinson, Kan., and a steel tower factory in Texas.

A separate division of the conglomerate, Siemens Industry, was awarded \$28.3 million in tax credits to help it expand a factory in Elgin, Ill., to make wind turbine gearbox parts.

Suzlon (India) a recent Indian entry to the market that has quickly risen to the fifth largest turbine installer in the United States, installed 172 turbines under the grant program. Suzlon opened a blade plant in Pipestone, Minn., in 2007 and once employed 500 workers. Following layoffs this summer, the plant is now down to 164 employees.

Repower (India) a German company that was purchased by Suzlon in 2008, installed 53 turbines under the grant program. Repower has no listed plans to establish manufacturing in the United States.

Label Letter

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A man was sitting in the waiting room of the hospital after his wife had gone into labor and the nurse walked out and said to the man sitting next to him, "Congratulations sir, you're the new father of twins!"

The man replied, "How about that, I work for the Doublemint Chewing Gum company."

About an hour later, the same nurse entered the waiting

room and announced that Mr. Smith's wife has just had triplets. Mr. Smith stood up and said, "Well, how do you like that, I work for the 3M Company."

Another man that was sitting in the waiting room got up and started to leave. When the nurse asked him why he was leaving, he remarked, "I think I need a breath of fresh air. I work for 7-UP."

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Court Sides With OSHA On Worker Safety Rules

A federal appeals court has upheld the power of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to determine how to draft and uphold workplace safety rules. The decision marked a major win for workers, thousands of whom die on the job every year.

The court ruling stemmed from a case in 2003 in which a contractor in Houston hired 11 immigrant workers to strip asbestos from a building but neither trained the workers nor provided them with respirators to protect them from the dangerous substance.

A city inspector visiting the job site ordered the work to stopped, but the contractor, Eric Ho, coerced the workers into staying on the job, working at night behind locked gates.

OSHA ultimately cited Ho 11 times for not training each worker and another 11 for not providing each with a respirator.

The Bush administration's Occupational Safety and Health

Review Commission overturned the majority of the citations, saying Ho could only be cited once on the training violation and once on the safety equipment violation. This had the effect of cutting Ho's fines by about 95 percent.

OSHA officials rewrote the rules to avoid another such episode, but the National Association of Home Builders sued, claiming OSHA didn't have the authority to say that employers could be cited for each worker left unprotected. Now, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit has ruled that OSHA has such authority and sided with the agency in the case.

AFL-CIO General Counsel Lynn Rhinehart says the decision makes clear that if an employer doesn't protect its workers, "the employer can get cited for each worker it doesn't protect. This is a really important principle that will help ensure that workers get the protection they need to be safe on the job."

The 'End' of the Great Recession: Hold the Celebration

Many American workers see little reason to be optimistic about the nation's economic outlook, and for entirely understandable reasons. The Dow may be breaking 11,000, but the unemployment rate is hovering near 10 per cent. Worse, we could still have very high unemployment two years from now.

There are a few factors that underpin this dour outlook.

First, we need to create around 100,000 jobs each month just so that unemployment does not rise as the population grows and more people seek work. To put a serious dent in the unemployment rate, we'd need to create 300,000 jobs each month. In March, the economy added roughly 160,000 jobs. Compared with this time last year, when the economy was shedding hundreds of thousands of jobs each month, that's a big improvement. But it's not good enough.

Second, companies didn't just lay people off during the recession—they also cut the hours of the employees who stayed on their payrolls. So as business picks back up, the first thing they'll do is restore those hours. That will be a welcome improvement for their employees, but only then will companies start hiring. And the aggregate drop in work hours since the

recession began has been significantly larger than the drop in jobs.

Third, the labor market is in worse shape than even the official 9.7 per cent unemployment rate indicates. The unemployment rate does not include people who want a job but have not actively looked for one recently. Nor does it include part-time workers who want full-time work. This broader measure of underemployment stands at about 17 percent. It's significantly higher for black and Hispanic workers.

The upshot of all this is not pretty. By the end of 2012—more than two years from now—there is a very real chance that unemployment could still be 8 per cent or higher. To guard against this unacceptable outcome, Congress should pass job creation legislation, starting with a bill sponsored by Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., that would create 1 million jobs in local communities around the country.

Lawrence Mishel

President

Economic Policy Institute

Dim Outlook on Wages

Private sector employees shouldn't expect much in the way of wage increases in the coming months, according to an analysis by the Bureau of National Affairs (BNA).

The private publisher said wage expectations have been falling for two years now. "Any time you have an unemployment rate near 10 percent," said economic consultant Kathryn Kobe, "there's still a lot of excess labor capacity."

In the coming months, according to BNA, the pace of wage growth for workers in the private sector is expected to remain at or below the 2009 increase of 1.4 percent. That was the smallest 12-month rise on record since at least 1979.

The survey did not compare anticipated wage increases in union vs. nonunion settings.

Biden Tells Trades Leaders Obama is Fighting for Workers

Vice President Joe Biden told some 3,000 delegates to the AFL-CIO's Building and Construction Trades Department (BCTD) legislative conference in Washington that the Obama administration's economic and jobs policies are beginning to take root.

The administration, Biden told the friendly crowd, is "waging a war to get you back where you belong—not just for your sake but for the sake of the middle class, because if you do not grow, the middle class will not grow."

He said the nation must lead the world in education, in energy, in health care and more. But "without a growing middle class our ability to lead to the 21st century is diminished," he said.

In a fleeting reference to the Employee Free Choice Act, which would make it easier for workers to gain union representation, Biden declared: "We want to make sure you can sign up for a union just like you sign up to vote." The line drew cheers from the crowd, but the vice president offered no follow-up on what the administration is doing to get the proposal back on track.

Biden was introduced by BCTD President Mark Ayers, who opened the three-day April gathering with the declaration that putting building tradesmen and women back to work "is our number one priority." Unemployment in the trades is around 25 percent.

Ayers also slammed the "poisonous and reprehensible behaviors of Wall Street and eight years of an administration that had hopes of eradicating unions. Together they have torn a gaping hole in the financial fabric of our nation and our very existence as the stalwarts of the middle class."

While apparently agreeing with Biden's view that recovery is underway, Ayers said it "will be neither painless nor short term." He pointed to a variety of measures under consideration on Capitol Hill that could boost the economy and construction jobs, but are being stalled by the Republican "just say 'No'" strategy.

One example, he said: "a balanced energy and climate bill that will generate tens of thousands of construction jobs for our members now and in the future is languishing in the Senate."

UCS News Service

After all, when you come right down to it, how many people speak the same language even when they speak the same language?

Russell Hoban

The biggest reward for a thing well done is to have done it.

Voltaire

An honorable defeat is better than a dishonest victory.

Millard Fillmore

Happiness is not a reward—it is a consequence. Suffering is not a punishment—it is a result.

Robert Green Ingersoll

Contentment is the realization of how much I already have.

Dave Grant

Knowledge comes by taking things apart: analysis. But wisdom comes by putting things together.

John A. Morrison

Labor, Community Activists Rally for Taxes on Speculators

Labor and community activists rallied in 40 cities across the country on April 15—Tax Day—to highlight the need for good jobs and outline ways to pay for them, including taxes on Wall Street speculators.

At a Washington, D.C. news conference AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and others called on President Obama and Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner to embrace a proposed Financial Speculation Tax and on Congress to move swiftly for its enactment.

The tax is described by supporters as a small levy on financial short-term transactions. Its advocates say it would curb excessive speculation by big banks while having minimal impact on long-term investors.

According to Jobs With Justice, the primary organizer of the April 15 demonstrations, this is how unfair the U.S. tax system has become:

- Two-thirds of U.S. corporations paid no U.S. income

tax between 1998 and 2005. "Corporations like ExxonMobil and Wal-Mart find ways to evade taxes and get taxpayer money to pick up their tab."

- Wall Street speculators are rewarding themselves with record pay and bonuses and spend millions lobbying against financial regulations—subsidized in their lobbying by the tax payments of average Americans.

- Tax rates on millionaires keep dropping. Specifically, households with incomes over \$1 million paid income tax equal to 22.1 percent of their adjusted gross income in 2007. This is down from 23.4 percent in 2004, and down from 30.8 percent in 1996.

- The income gap between the richest 10 percent of Americans and the rest of us has been widening for 30 years. The top 10 percent took 30-35 percent of total national income from the early 1940s to the early 1980s; today it is in the 45-50 percent range.

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Administration Moves Ahead To Kill Anti-Union Scheme

The Obama administration is a step closer to killing off a George W. Bush-era scheme that reimburses federal contractors for their expenses in waging anti-union campaigns.

Under that program, bitterly attacked by labor when first put in place, federal contractors are able to use taxpayer dollars to hire union-busting consulting firms, produce anti-union materials, pay the wages of workers forced to attend anti-union meetings, and the like.

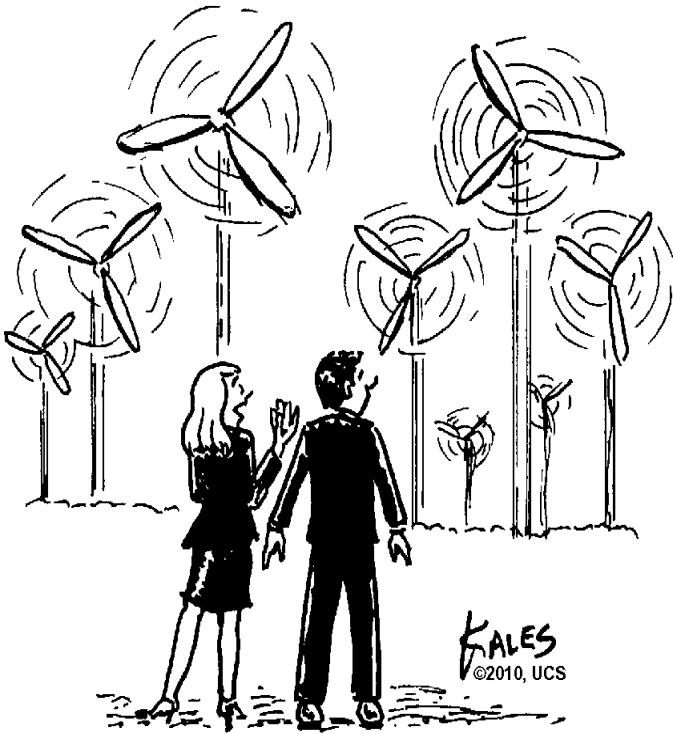
The U.S. Chamber of Commerce complained that the Obama administration's proposal to disallow this activity

interferes with employers' "rights to communicate with their employees."

Union advocates declared that position nonsense, pointing out that businesses can and do communicate with their workers all they want—but shouldn't be doing it with taxpayer dollars.

The administration's proposal to end the practice was published in the Federal Register. The public has until June 14 to comment, after which a formal rule will be put in place.

UCS News Service



"You can always tell when the talk radio programs sign on."



"They're not slowing down when it says 'Utility Work Ahead!'"

Danish Brewery Workers Strike Over New Drinking Rules

Hundreds of warehouse workers and drivers at Danish brewer Carlsberg halted work for five days in April to protest a company decision to limit beer drinking at work to lunch breaks.

Under the Copenhagen-based company's old policy, workers were free to help themselves to beer from coolers and refrigerators at any time during the workday. But as of April 1, workers at the world's fourth-largest brewery were allowed to drink beer in the canteen only during lunch breaks.

Dennis Onsvig, a union representative, told the Copenhagen Post the strike was about more than just drinking on the job.

"We've actually stopped working because Carlsberg's management violated the bargaining agreement by making a policy change without our input," he said. "There was no dialogue over the issue at all, and that's just not good enough."

Workers returned to the job after management agreed to sit down with the union and look at the policy.

a **Power Plant District Director's Report**

Changes seem to be incessant as I stated last month. The time is now to look at the future of our Union, so I believe why not take advantage of an opportunity.

We have been subjected to many, some say too many, issues in the last year in itself. These changes have been looked at anything from interruptions in routines to major disruptions and even life and career moves and relocations. Some of us have dealt with these changes with ease and some have seen disappointment and disgust.

So, where do we go from here?

First of all, I need to suggest look forward. There have been good and bad, but dwelling on the bad is only beneficial if you actually use what you have learned from it in a positive manner. Use the system and resources available to you including your personal experience and your Stewards for advice on Contractual issues. Take this opportunity to position yourself for the long term. Look at the business side of your career and educate yourself now. This Company has been talking the talk for over fifteen years so do a little self assessment and choose a direction, now that there may not be much for job movement in the next couple years because you

may have time.

Second, the co-workers you have been working with, or have just met, or you may need to meet, have built a system within their jobs. Experience has always been and needs to be appreciated, but also needs to be expanded continually through new ideas and perspectives. Those with seniority and tenure can and do bring a lot to the table in the knowledge department. So, do we simply drag our newer or junior people through their workday? Ask everyone for their input. This exchange brings forth not only ideas, but develops relationships beyond where they may have been for possibly years. I do not want to sound like I am some sort of cheerleader, but I am an advocate of teamwork and looking for the different values in our talents and diversities. We need not only to rest on our laurels, we need to be able to mold them and keep professionalism active.

It is Springtime. The change the season brings can offer opportunity. Take advantage of it while we are all still vertical.

In Solidarity,
Kevin Dessell

Let Wall Street Execs Leave

“Oh my, oh my,” chattered the chicken littles of Wall Street when the public demanded cuts in their obscene pay packages. “The sky is falling,” they cried, flocking to Washington to save their pay.

Wall Street's preening executives insisted that the lynchpin of America's entire financial system was their own multimillion-dollar salaries, bonuses, stock options, and perks. Cut their money, they threatened, and they would flee to greener pastures, taking with them the expertise needed to repair the financial system.

This was a ludicrous claim, since there's not a huge job market for failed bankers demanding rich rations and constant stroking. Nonetheless, skittish Washington officials backed off, and the pampered bankers of Wall Street are again feeding on multimillion-dollar pay packages. Still, one wonders, would they have actually fled if Washington had stood up to them?

One who did take a stand was Kenneth Feinberg, a special

regulator brought in to set the pay of top executives in five financial and automobile companies that got multiple bailouts from us. He has cut their pay by 77 percent since 2008. Yet, the vast majority of them stayed on the job, with only 15 percent choosing to look elsewhere or retire.

Why? First, even with their paychecks whacked by three-fourths, the top execs are still drawing an average of \$1.6 million a year—enough to make ends meet, even for a corporate big shot. But, second, it turns out that not every executive is a greed machine motivated only by money. Such human factors as personal pride and a sense of loyalty (both to their companies and their country) made them want to stay and help fix America's economic wreck.

So let's stop pampering the chicken littles of Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan, and other firms. They've got nowhere to go, and even if some leave, others can do the job.

Jim Hightower

Gerard to NRC: Use U.S. Steel for Nuclear Plants

Steelworkers President Leo Gerard says, “wait just a darn minute!”

If the federal government is going to guarantee \$8.3 billion in loans to build two new nuclear plants in Georgia, shouldn't somebody in the U.S. be making the parts for those reactors?

Gerard made the comments in a letter to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, pointing out that issues of safety, quality and economics are at stake.

Westinghouse designed the central components of the proposed plants, specifying that construction of the reactor

vessels and steam generators can only be obtained from steel mills in Japan and South Korea.

The Georgia plants are to be licensed to the Southern Company, which hopes to start building by the end of next year. At least 20 percent of the \$12 billion price tag for the plants would be spent abroad, according to Westinghouse.

If the company makes a design change, U.S. steel manufacturers might be able to bid on the project.

Label Letter

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Women, 78 Cents; Men, \$1.00

April 20 marked catch-up day for women’s pay—the day on which women workers completed the nearly 16 months of work that brought them up to what men were paid in just 12.

Put another way, for every dollar men made last year, women made just 78 cents, so it takes women more than a year and one-quarter to make what men earn in just one year.

According to the most recent data available (2008) from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median wages of full-time, year-round workers that year stood at \$35,745 for women and \$46,367 for men.

The average woman loses \$700,000 in pay due to gender discrimination in her lifetime, according to advocates of the

Paycheck Fairness Act, approved by the House in 2009 but still awaiting action in the Senate.

To mark the occasion Pres. Obama declared April 20 National Pay Equity Day, declaring:

“The collective action of businesses, community organizations, and individuals is necessary to ensure that every woman receives just treatment and compensation. I call upon American men and women, and all employers, to acknowledge the injustice of wage discrimination and to commit themselves to equal pay for equal work.”

UCS News Service

Real difficulties can be overcome, it is only the imaginary ones that are unconquerable.

Theodore N. Vail

If you have some money, share it. And if you have some time, do something worthwhile.

Jerome Stone

More than 40,000 USPS Jobs Threatened by Delivery Plans

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is moving ahead with plans to eliminate Saturday mail delivery, a scheme bitterly fought by postal unions concerned about job losses and declining service to the public.

In a report filed with the Postal Regulatory Commission, the Postal Service said moving to five-day delivery could cut an estimated 40,158 full-time positions.

National Association of Letter Carriers President Frederic V. Rolando said the move would cost 50,000 to 80,000 jobs “in the middle of a jobs crisis.” The Postal Service employs

approximately 600,000 people.

According to the report, the Postal Service wants to implement the shorter delivery week no later than Sept. 30, 2011. It said the move would save the postal service about \$3 billion annually, nearly all of it by dumping city and rural letter carrier positions.

Union President Rolando noted that any change must be approved by Congress and in fact it is not a “done deal.”

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