

1201 Sheridan Road
Escanaba, MI 49829

Phone: 906.786.1846
Fax: 906.233.9250

21 NEWS

Editor: Gerald Kell **WWW.USW2-21.COM** May, 2016
Contact Editor at: djgribble@gmail.com or 906.869.7943

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.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

Strike for Hunger: June 3rd-5th Elmer's & Super One

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.

Community Clean Up—May 21st



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



www.pacelocal21.proboards.com



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Union Updates

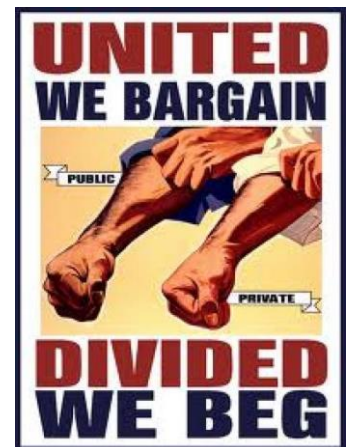
Steve Benoit, President

Arbitrations- Three arbitrations are scheduled for summer and fall. Two deal with the Company's claim of insubordination and the other addresses a termination. A great deal of time and resources goes into these arbitrations to optimize the likelihood of a positive outcome for the members involved.

Third Steps- One of the 3rd step grievances deals with the termination of Union Brother, Matt Scheuren. The Company has made several claims

for the termination. The Union Committee sees that these claims are either false or unacceptable to justify termination. A preemptive vote was passed at the Hall to take this case to arbitration if the 3rd steps do not provide an acceptable result. We will fight for Matt's job. I want to thank the Union Brothers that helped pull together the information for this case. The information brought forth from Jim St. Peter, Jason Branstrom, and Ross Strand has been priceless in this case. I also want to thank the members in the Wood Yard for their solidarity and support for Matt. It's inspiring when a group of Union Brothers and Sisters come together to support a Brother or Sister.

The other two 3rd steps were in regards to Company contracting our work for mowing grass. This work has always been Yard/USW work. Article 16 states that contractors may be utilized for Construction and Maintenance work. Our contention is the Company did not have the right to contract it because it's neither Construction nor Maintenance work and we are seeking a grievance answer re-affirming this. The last grievance is for Prime Time Vacation. The Company still contends that it is their right to change



the guidelines for vacations. We continue to look into our defense that they went beyond their contractual right.

Smoking- The Company has unilaterally decided to implement the new Smoking Policy on June 1, 2016. We believe they are not bargaining in good faith and we have filed a Board Charge. We provided a proposal to the Company showing that we are willing to continue bargaining; we are not at an impasse. The Company did come back with a counter and the Union Committee is looking at this to see where we should move from here.

Contract Survey Results- We will be sharing the results from the survey that was taken for the upcoming contract at the next Union Meeting, Wednesday, May 11th. These results will only be shared at Union Meetings so please make every effort to attend.

Again, please keep up to date on the media sites where we will share this information. For more information please join the Union Facebook, Message Board, or join our email by sending a request to unitedsteelworkerslocal21@yahoo.com. Also attending monthly Union Meetings on the second Wednesday is a must as we approach contract negotiations. Union meetings present a great opportunity to voice your opinions, make decisions on union business and decide what happens in your workplace.

Bylaw changes

There is a call for one change and two additions to the bylaws. They will be read at three Union Meetings (one reading was done at the April meeting) and then a vote will be taken. Below are the proposed By-law changes/addition:

- **Bylaw Change**

Current Bylaw reads:

The local union herewith confers on its president, the authority to spend up to fifty dollars (\$50.00) for flowers, mass cards, etc. in case of the death of a member or a member's family.

The change:

The local union herewith confers on its president, the authority to spend up to sixty-five dollars (**\$65.00**) for flowers, Mass cards, etc. in case of the death of a member or a member's family.

- **Bylaw Additions**

1. Wages paid that are not lost time are approved by the president and paid at the employee's base straight time rate not to exceed 8 hours in a day.

President has the authority to authorize reimbursement of committee member cellphone use, not to exceed \$25.00 per month per committee member.

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Who's in your corner?

Gerald Kell, Rapid Response

For months now I've been addressing with you many of the legislative issues that face our union and the significant impact this election cycle will have on those issues moving forward. We are now coming into the typical election season leading into the November's general. It's time we take a serious look at candidates. There are many local and national seats with which we should be heavily concerned. I never want to simply tell anyone who they should vote for, nor do I intend to start. I am, however, compelled to share accurate and factual information that applies to our situation. In other words, who supports our industry and our ability to maintain current contracts and gain back some of what we've lost. Regardless of your position on politics, you will be affected by the platforms of these candidates and incumbents.

Our detractors have built their arsenal through legislative action and the most effective recourse for us is an in-kind response. We must elect officials on every level who will have our best interest in mind. We the people—the working middle class—not the

**How they
voted**



big money special interests like ALEC (Please Google ALEC if you're unaware of this economically destructive outfit).

When assessing a candidate, there are a few simple topics that you can look to for determining their allegiance. First of all, do they support Right to Work for Less legislation, and furthermore do they openly support its repeal? By now you should know how detrimental RTW legislation is to our membership's capacity to bargain reasonable contracts. Allowing people to have the benefits of the bargained contract without paying for it is simply a partisan attempt to defund unions. If a candidate cannot publicly support its repeal, they're no friend of the middle class. In case you forgot, it is our current, Republican held House, Senate and Governor's Mansion who passed the RTW legislation during a lame duck session a couple years ago.

Then there's trade. It cannot be understated how troubling the issue of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Trade Deal is. Our nation already faces a \$500 Billion dollar deficit each year and being in the paper industry, it is imperative that you understand why this deal will have such a negative and direct impact on our jobs. Supporting the TPP will only allow paper from overseas to continue undermining our market with an unfair advantage of slave wages and lack of environmental oversight. Several of the countries in the deal have already had trade cases ruled against them or are now pending. The trade suits we file typically result in tariffs, imagine the impact without these options.



Not only have they attacked us in Michigan with Right to Freeload, but recently they passed a law aimed at mitigating voluntary check-offs for PAC contributions. It's become clear that the bill was intended to defund the labor movement and limit individual locals from raising funds. It's an obvious effort to quell our voice. The bill is SB 0571 and

you're welcome to look it up—fair warning, it's a mind-numbingly boring read. As you can imagine, a group of lawyers' collective thoughts typically makes for poor entertainment value. And while there

was a recent judgment in Wisconsin that correctly ruled Governor Walker's scab legislation unconstitutional, the likely outcome will land it in the state's Supreme Court which has three Walker appointees which leaves the court in a conservative majority.

This leads me to the next point, while you may not want to identify as a supporter of either party, or maybe you currently do identify with one party, the simple truth is that when it comes to your job and union strength, the modern day Republican Party has essentially left us for dead. Personally, I'll vote for whoever is willing to support the labor movement and middle class, but it's become undeniably clear where you can find that support and where you cannot. As you conduct your research on who voted on what, and where they currently stand, take note of the (D) or (R) behind their name, you'll see this reflected more often than not. Most will run with political party platforms as opposed to what's best for their actual constituents.

Recently, we had a candidate claim to be pro-labor **and** said that he would not support the repeal of right to work legislation. I'm sorry, but those two concepts are mutually exclusive, you simply cannot be supportive of labor and the right to freeload. The majority of aspiring and active politicians aren't going to be easily transparent, but the identifiers of their true beliefs and core are often available with a little digging and prodding.



A business card for Jerry's Body Shop. The card has a white background with a blue and yellow border. At the top, the text "Jerry's Body Shop" is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, followed by "#1 Collision Experts" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font. Below this, the address "1000 1st Ave S Escanaba, MI 49829" is listed. To the right of the text is a photograph of a blue sports car. At the bottom left, the phone number "Phone: 906-786-6425" and fax number "Fax: 906-789-6026" are listed, along with the email address "jerrysbodyshop01@sbcglobal.net". At the bottom right, the name "Jamie Sebeck" is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, followed by "Owner/Operator" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font.

***A message from Michigan's very own
U.S. Senator, Gary Peters (D)***

"Manufacturers are the backbone of our economy – both in Michigan and across the country. Last month, I was pleased to introduce the Manufacturing Extension Partnership Improvement Act, which would expand and improve the MEP program to better serve small to medium-sized manufacturing companies. Michigan's MEP affiliate, the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC), has been working with small and medium-sized businesses across the state since 1991, and it currently serves more than 470 Michigan companies, including several in the Upper Peninsula. By providing resources and services, such as financial coaching, human resources training, and custom website design, MMTC will continue to support Michigan workers as they drive innovation and bolster our economic competitiveness around the world."



Picnic

Steve Benoit, President

Let's cut to the chase I am hearing a great deal of concern with what Verso is doing to our mill and I do not blame you for being concerned. What I will tell you is that this union is not allowing them to over step themselves. Let me be completely "Transparent", we recently were told that the company was looking at canceling our company picnic because it just wouldn't be right at this time with the bankruptcy. Well I am going to tell you that after some talking about this concern John Donahue was willing to sit down and talk about the picnic. Some of the things that we shared with John and Patty at this meeting was the fact that on a regular basis this mill is spending crazy amounts of money on food for lunches and other events....if we are in bankruptcy why are we still spending this money on management but not on the people as a whole? We also spoke to the fact that the perception out there is that this company is spending money on extra things that maybe we should not be, examples: flying people home for weekends, VIP events at the Casino, etc.. Now, I have to say these are rumors and have not been confirmed but it is the perception on the floor and the concern that if we can do these type things how can you say it is not a good time to have a picnic that would bring the whole mill together. This is spending that every employee at the Escanaba


Identifying and Reporting Hazards

Charles Way, 1st Vice President

Several members of the committee recently attended the USW Paper Bargaining conference in Pittsburgh. Much of the conference centered round safety in the paper industry. There was much talk about how we are now the most dangerous industry represented by the USW. We have had many fatalities within the paper groups. The deaths were mostly caused by mobile equipment, hazardous substances, falls, caught-in, and struck by moving equipment or flying debris/objects. There have been some trends identified that are common in the paper industry. They are but not wholly identified as deaths occurring at the beginning or end of shifts, the first day back after days off. They happened to occur with known hazards that are not acted upon or communicated. This is due to poor planning of jobs and the perception that we have done this a hundred times before and nothing ever happened. It happens at facilities that have had deaths before with similar or the same hazards. A big one is lack of maintenance and inspections. Cultural issues in the mills such as fixing on the fly, reluctance to exercise the right to act when things are unsafe, and of course, lack of training!


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 **MLS**

Mill can benefit from not just a choice few. I will say I appreciate the fact that we are sitting down to talk. This is one example of what you the union will not allow especially something that was fought for in arbitration by members before us.

SOS

Brandon Stromberg, Secretary

We need your help! According to the latest Michigan census, from 2010 to 2014 the median income in 3/4 of our state's cities declined and poverty rose in 2/3 of those communities. Did you know out of all the industrialized nations in the world the United States has one of the worst income inequality rates? This year we have decided to expand our Strike for Hunger to meet the increased need in our community. Please contact me at 906.284.1604 to volunteer some of your time to this event. Thank you in advance.

USW Leadership Training

Brandon Stromberg, Secretary/Rapid Response

Recently, I was fortunate enough to attend training at the Linden Hall USW facility in Pennsylvania. There were more than forty people from across the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, and Virgin Islands. A small portion of the group only spoke French and had to employ a translator for the duration of the course. We discussed a wide array of topics including, labor history, cultural anthropology, political economics, and many more. Much of our work was done in small groups. This enabled us to get to know each person and we learned so much from each other's unique perspective. I saw firsthand how everything the USW International does is directly linked to us on a local level. We discussed policies and principles of the Union and how it directs the actions of the USW every day such as fairness, respect, dignity, equality, and solidarity. Thank you for sending me to this training and I look forward to sharing more with you all in the coming months.

Stand Strong

Steve Benoit, President

Let's say you are at meeting with management and let's just say the Mill Manager is running the meeting stating, "Every time we try to accomplish something here in Escanaba the Union

seems to put up a roadblock making it difficult for us to get things done in a timely manner." When the Mill Manager is asked to provide examples one of the examples he provides is the change of the cooking method in the digesters and the union not being able to deal with this change. How do you respond?

You respond like every Union Brother and Sister did in that area by continuing to voice your concern to everybody and anybody because the change to the cooking method caused an unsafe working condition. You respond as the Union Committee did by saying this is a safety issue if you think that we were putting up a roadblock to cause issues that comment is an issue. **THIS WAS DEALING WITH SAFETY!!**

I bring this to your attention because this is an example of where I, as your Union President, amongst many other things, was very proud of the solidarity in this. The area joined as one voice, a union, and made a positive change in their work area. I want to be clear that they are still working on this but the issue is moving in a positive direction. I have seen this type of solidarity in many areas of our mill. Things may seem trying at times and you may think that we are fighting a battle that we have never fought before but just remember this union has not changed, we still have the strong backbone that we have had for years. We have the backbone that our union brothers and sisters had back in days where they fought for each and every thing that we enjoy today. We are a union and individually your voice may not be heard by the company but I will tell you it will be heard when a group speaks up, as a paper machine area speaks or as we speak up as a union of over 650 members. Stand Up, Speak Out, for Safety and your Rights as a Worker.

Available Help

Brandon Stromberg, Secretary/Rapid Response

Within the last year, we have experienced quite a few changes at our workplace; some are positive, some are negative. Change is never easy, but I know we all continue to do the absolute best we can. If we find ourselves struggling at work or at home, even while doing our best, it's important not to forget an amazing resource we have. It's called the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and is administered by Freckman and Associates. Help is available to you and your family free of charge. Their number is 1.800.331.3226. You can call them 24/7. When you call, you will need to answer some

questions which could take 15-30 minutes. They may give you service options, but if you would like to meet with a local person, such as Mark Halfrisch, just let them know. If you have any issues or questions with the provider please contact me or any EAP committee member. Don't forget to get your popcorn on EAP popcorn days!

Spring into Safety

Bob Larson, 2nd Vice President

The month of May is upon us and Spring is in the air. Everyone's thoughts are on getting outside, so let's not forget the dangers of our workplace when thinking about what we'll be doing after work. I went to a USW Conference in Pittsburgh and there were 20 empty chairs with hard hats on them to represent Union Brothers and Sisters killed at work over the past two years! Some were the result of people new to jobs, were poorly trained, or pressured to do more with less. One that stuck out in my mind was a Brother who saw a dangerous situation and did nothing because he was afraid of having a spotlight on his back. That indecision cost another employee their life and the Brother a life time of regret. Be your brother's keeper. We do a pretty good job of this here in Escanaba; someone even took it upon themselves to call MIOSHA when Management in the Kraft Mill would not address the problems with the digesters moving. The Company has been working on this problem now but the only thing you hear is, "we're setting tonnage records." The Wood Yard has also been doing a great job speaking up; they recently changed a line of progression so it is fair to everyone and are working to create a bark hauling job. So get on the bus and help to protect your Union Brothers and Sisters, because the Kool-Aid drinkers won't.



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Paperless Bay College: Not In The Future

Laura Coleman, Bay President

Recently, it was mistakenly reported at a Union meeting that Bay College was going paperless. Each year, Bay College buys paper made in the USA through a partnership with the Delta Schoolcraft ISD. The average annual purchase over the last two years is 340 cases of Steen Macek paper. Over the last decade, Bay College has been a recognized leader in quality improvement initiatives aimed at student success. These initiatives have either been grant-funded, part of a larger effort, or internal to streamline processes and improve the student experience.

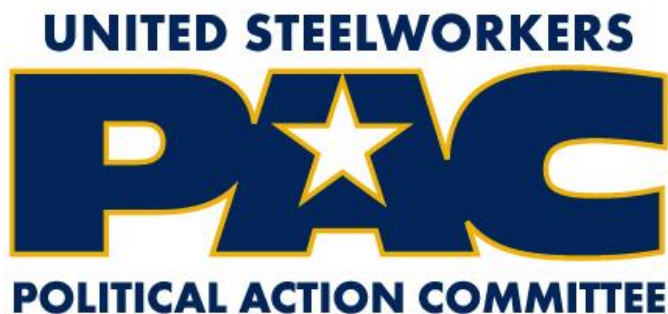
We've recognized that the cost of textbooks has become a barrier to many of our students. Many cost over \$200 and some eclipse the \$300 mark. For lower-income students especially, this can prevent them from completing a degree. We have again embarked on an effort to help our students succeed by reducing or eliminating this barrier through open educational resources.

Open Educational Resources, or OER, are course materials that bypass the typical publisher model. Some are produced and printed internally—five of which we have already completed. Other materials are freely available on the web, which can either be printed for sale in our bookstore or provided online. In either case, our goal is to offer students an alternative to expensive textbooks by providing them with learning resources for free or at a significantly-reduced cost (typically \$40 or less).

To help us along this path, we applied for a grant through *Achieving the Dream*, an organization with a long history of leadership in national student success initiatives. If awarded the grant, Bay will receive \$100K for developing multiple degree paths utilizing OER. This would be an important step in our efforts to enable completion of an entire degree using just OER, whereas now there is few. Our initial focus would be on degrees in liberal arts, business administration, and mechatronics/robotics. In the next month we will know if our application succeeded. Regardless of that outcome we plan to move forward with OER.

We know that misperceptions of this project led people to believe we were going paperless, but we do not expect any decrease in the amount of paper we currently purchase. The paper industry is very important to our community and to Bay College. Thank you for bringing this concern to our attention so we could clarify our intentions.

Do you know that USW District 2 has a 94% active membership density? We are stronger in numbers. Let us proudly keep that number high, encourage membership retention and pursue expansion. You can help this effort by contributing the USW PAC fund. USW PAC makes it possible for our union to run the most effective, member-driven program in the labor movement; and, it is funded entirely by voluntary contributions from members like you. Federal law prohibits your dues dollars from being used for most political purposes, which is why our union has established the United Steelworkers Political Action Committee (USW PAC). Please take the opportunity to support those who support you! Included in this newsletter is a page that explains more and tells you how to help!



WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

Jeff Skorupski, 3rd Vice President

Weingarten rights guarantee an employee the right to Union representation during an investigatory interview. These rights, established by the Supreme Court, in 1975 in the case of J. Weingarten Inc, must be claimed by the employee. The supervisor has no obligation to inform an employee that s/he is entitled to Union representation.

What is an Investigatory Interview?

An investigatory interview is one in which a Supervisor questions an employee to obtain information which could be used as a basis for discipline or asks an employee to defend his/her conduct. If an employee has a reasonable belief that discipline or discharge may result from what s/he says, the employee has the right to request Union representation.



Examples of such an interview are:

1. The interview is part of the employer's disciplinary procedure or is a component of the employer's procedure for determining whether discipline will be imposed.

2. The purpose of the interview is to investigate an employee's performance where discipline, demotion or other adverse consequences to the employee's job status or working conditions are a possible result.

3. The purpose of the interview is to elicit facts from the employee to support disciplinary action that is probable or that is being considered, or to obtain admissions of misconduct or other evidence to support a disciplinary decision already made.

4. The employee is required to explain his/her conduct, or defend it during the interview, or is compelled to answer questions or give evidence.

It is an obligation of the Union to educate bargaining unit employees about their Weingarten rights BEFORE an occasion to use them arises. An employee must state to the employer that he/she wants a Union representative present; the employer has no obligation to ask: the employee if she/he wants a representative.

When an investigatory interview occurs, the following rules apply:

Rule 1 - The employee must make a clear request for Union representation before or during the interview. The employee can't be punished for making this request.

Rule 2 - After the employee makes the request, the supervisor has 3 options. S/he must either:

a. Grant the request and delay the interview until the Union representative arrives and has a chance to consult privately with the employee.

b. Deny the request and end the interview immediately.

c. Give the employee a Choice of: 1) having the interview without representation or 2) ending the interview.



The above photo was taken at the 2016 Paper Bargaining Conference in Pittsburgh. Each chair is adorned in black linen, holds a hard hat, and represents an employee killed at work, in the paper industry since the last conference—less than two years ago. It also serves as a reminder to our membership to stand up, speak out. Understand the inherent dangers of our industry and be vocal about hazards!



Report Injuries

Ross Strand, Comp Advocate

I just want to remind everyone to turn in all injuries on time. I also want to remind everyone to turn in any incidents such as damage to equipment or property right away, these should be turned in the day or shift that it happens. If you get injured at work, take good notes, I can't stress that enough.

Strike For Hunger June 3rd – 5th Elmer's County Market & Super One Foods

THIS DAY IN UNION HISTORY

→MAY 11TH

NATIONWIDE RAILWAY STRIKE BEGINS AT PULLMAN, ILL. NEARLY 260,000 RAILROAD WORKERS ULTIMATELY JOINED THE STRIKE TO PROTEST WAGE CUTS BY THE PULLMAN PALACE CAR CO. - 1894



Pullman strikers confront the IL National Guard, 1894

→MAY 13TH

UAW PRESIDENT DOUGLAS A. FRASER IS NAMED TO THE CHRYSLER CORP. BOARD OF DIRECTORS, BECOMING THE FIRST UNION REPRESENTATIVE EVER TO SIT ON THE BOARD OF A MAJOR U.S. CORPORATION - 1980

→MAY 14TH

MILWAUKEE BREWERY WORKERS BEGIN 10-WEEK STRIKE, DEMANDING CONTRACTS COMPARABLE TO EAST AND WEST COAST WORKERS. THE STRIKE WAS WON BECAUSE BLATZ BREWERY ACCEPTED THEIR DEMANDS, BUT BLATZ WAS OUSTED FROM THE BREWERS ASSOCIATION FOR "UNETHICAL" BUSINESS METHODS - 1953

