



ITPENews

AFFILIATED AS LOCAL 4873 WITH OPEIU-AFL-CIO

President John F. Conley ■ Sec. Treas. John Brenton, III ■ Vice Presidents Elwood Hampton, T. (Ruthie) Jones, Mary Williams

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Report of the PRESIDENT

by John F. Conley

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we look back and review the year 2005, we should not claim it as a year of achievements for the ITPEU. Organizing was at its lowest level in many years. It was a year we lost the services of two of our long time representatives. In April, Vice-President Mary Williams suffered a stroke that left her with some physical problems denying her the ability to return to work. In May, Representative Pat Hasard retired. Mary and Pat had a combined time of 42 years of experience in Labor relations. Both are missed. Fortunately, we have a number of dedicated representatives who worked diligently and picked up the workload. I am proud to say all the contracts in Mary and Pat's areas with a October 1 renewal were successfully negotiated timely.

Unfortunately, 2005 was the only year since the inception of the ITPE Health and Welfare Plan in 1971, that the Board of Trustees was forced to make unfavorable changes to our medical plan. Certainly our plan is not alone in having to restructure, as anyone knows. We learn everyday through the news media of major corporations requiring employees to pay a higher share for their health care. We also know there are over 45 million Americans without health insurance and that number is growing. (See the article on page 6). It is always difficult to accept any reduction in benefits. If it is any

consolation, all ITPE officers, representatives and staff employees are also feeling the effects as they are in the same plan. The good news is your representatives are negotiating with your employers for a higher hourly contribution rate. Lets hope that along with a reduction of medical inflation and the change of our PPO from Beech Street to Blue Cross/Blue Shield that these changes will be substantial enough to allow us to reinstate those lost benefits in time. Remember it is important that you use the Blue Cross/Blue Shield in-network providers for greater savings for yourself and the Plan.

Another event in 2005 that effected 350 or more of our union brothers and sisters was Hurricane Katrina. Most of our members were employed and made their homes in Gulfport/Biloxi, MS they were all victims of the devastation brought upon them by the wrath of Hurricane Katrina (see photos on pages 4 & 5) Thanks to our parent organization (OPEIU) for their wisdom in opening a relief fund on behalf of our ITPE members. My sincere thanks to OPEIU President Michael Goodwin and the OPEIU Executive Board for their commitment to our members by the matching of funds. My sincere thanks to all of you who have opened up your hearts and wallets to donate to this most worthy cause. Surely we are effected by the recent change in our health plan, but can you imagine the

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT *continued from cover*

suffering our union brothers and sisters who have lost everything must be enduring.

The year 2005 is also the year when several Unions left the AFL-CIO and formed the "Change to Win Coalition" the departure of those unions could not have come at a worse time. This certainly is not in the best interest of organized labor, especially with the political climate being so anti-worker by the present administration. Now is not the time to have the House of Labor divided. I for one am hopeful that history will repeat itself. Over the years labor, like many marriages, has experience many in-house quarrels. Several unions have left the AFL-CIO. Most returning after a year or so. Let's all hope that the differences between the AFL-CIO Leadership and the Change to Win Coalition can be resolved amicably, resulting in bringing all labor organizations under one umbrella, all working together for the economic, political and educational objectives of our members.

I am optimistic that 2006 will be a much better year. The ITPE Convention is scheduled for the week of March 26th through the 29th in Savannah, GA. It is my intent to propose to the delegates a restructure of our organization that will bring us into the 21st Century. We also have an Election of Officers and Delegates scheduled for 2006, therefore the timing for change could not be better.

2006 will also have importance to every, union brother and sister. It will present an opportunity for the Democratic Party to take back the House and Senate with a higher percentage of legislators that support Americas Workers. George W. Bush is in his second 4-year term, Corporate profits are escalating while our wages and living standards are declining. American Corporations are investing overseas rather than in the

United States. Jobs continue to be outsourced. The rich are getting richer from the labor of American and foreign workers. Gas prices are at an all time high. Oil company profits in the billions. Who pays? You pay. More and more Americans are falling below the poverty level, our national debt is increasing daily. The war in Iraq is a national disaster for Americans. Medical inflation is causing more and more Americans to go without health insurance. The American Dream has turned into an American nightmare. Are we as Americans going to accept this? I say no. You should also. Together we can make a difference. We will have that opportunity on November 7, 2006. On New Years make a resolution to commit to voting on November 7, 2006 Election Day. Choose your candidate carefully. Make sure he or she has a voting record supporting Labor. This year make several resolutions that are easy to keep. Get active in your Union and your community. Commit to helping your union organize those friends, relatives, neighbors in your community who do not enjoy higher wages and benefits unions provide through a Collective Bargaining Agreement.

It is fact union members receive higher wages and get more benefits than workers who don't have a voice on the job through a union.

To the elected ITPE delegates I am looking forward to seeing you at the convention.

Let's make 2006 a year to remember.

*Please Enjoy your holidays -
Thanks for your support!*



John F. Conley
President

UNION PLUS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

UNION MEMBERS ONLY

Since 1992, the Union Plus Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$2 million to students of working Union families who want to begin or continue their secondary education. The Union Plus Scholarship Program is offered through the Union Plus Education Foundation.

The 2006 scholarship application is now available. You can download the Union Plus Scholarship application by visiting their website at www.unionplus.org. The scholarship application is an Adobe Acrobat PDF file. If you do not already have Acrobat installed, you can download a free copy of the Adobe Acrobat Reader at their website. All completed applications must be postmarked by **January 31, 2006**. Only winners will be notified if they receive the scholarship.

Pioneer of Civil Rights



Rosa Parks, the “mother of the civil rights movement” was one of the most important citizens of the 20th century. Mrs. Parks was a seamstress in Montgomery, Alabama when, in December of 1955, she refused to give up her seat on a city bus to a white passenger. The bus driver had her arrested. She was tried and convicted of violating a local ordinance.



Her act sparked a city-wide boycott of the bus system by blacks that lasted more than a year. The boycott raised an unknown clergyman named Martin Luther King, Jr., to national prominence and resulted in the U.S. Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation on city buses. Over the next four decades, she helped make her fellow Americans aware of the history of the civil rights struggle. This pioneer in the struggle for racial equality was the recipient of innumerable honors, including the Martin Luther King Jr. Nonviolent Peace Prize and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Her example remains an inspiration to freedom-loving people everywhere. Sleep well, Rosa, Sleep Well, Your Rest is well deserved.

**REMEMBER.
HONOR.**



Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
January 16, 2006

VIRGINIA AFL-CIO UNION TELEGRAM

November 2005

VICTORY IS OURS. History is once again made in Virginia! Our endorsed candidate for Governor, Tim Kaine, is now Governor-elect of our Common wealth! On behalf of the Officers and Staff of the Virginia AFL-CIO, we thank you and your organization for your support and efforts to make “Labor 2005” a success. The Governor-elect on election night stated in the closing remarks of his acceptance speech that without organized labor he would not have been successful.



OPEIU RELIEF FUND

***** YOU CAN HELP *****

Pictures taken by ITPE Representatives Dennis Conley and Lynette Guillebeaux shortly after August 29th. These are some of the homes in Gulfport - Biloxi, Mississippi, where our members lived and worked.

OPEIU has established a disaster relief fund for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Our brothers and sisters need our help. Please note that because the fund is limited to our Union Brothers and Sisters, donations are not tax deductible. You can help by sending your donation payable to:

**OPEIU Relief Fund
ITPE-OPEIU Local 4873 AFL-CIO
2222 Bull Street
Savannah, GA 31401**



*OPEIU distributes over \$125,000
to members impacted by
Hurricane Katrina and Rita*

Soon after Hurricane Katrina blew ashore along the Gulf Coast, OPEIU International President Mike Goodwin appointed a committee to investigate the impact on OPEIU Local members employed in the area. The committees, International Vice-Presidents John Conley, Philip Pope, Green Lewis and Dan Dyer immediately recommended letters to be sent to the OPEIU Locals along the Gulf Coast to identify the members who suffered losses. Letters were also sent to all U.S. Locals seeking donations to assist the Gulf Coast OPEIU members.

Acting on a recommendation from the OPEIU Hurricane Katrina/Rita Relief Committee the International Executive Board approved matching dollar for dollar all contributions collected. The combined total of contributions and OPEIU matching funds come to just over 125,000 as of early December.

The OPEIU Relief Fund Committee met in early December 2005 to review and evaluate all information that had been collected regarding the devastation and losses incurred by OPEIU Members. The Committee, working within the funds available, found some monetary assistance for every member who reported losses. The amounts distributed to members varied depending on the severity of reported losses and based on recommendations from Local Union officers from the Gulf Coast area. According to Committee Chairman John Conley "a lot of members had losses but chose not to ask for assistance to make sure the money went to those who needed it the worst."

President Mike Goodwin said "The International Union Officers are extremely proud of the response to our request for donation to help our members during the most devastating natural disaster to ever hit the United States. Many thanks goes out to Local Unions, members, officers and others who contributed time and money to help our members along the Gulf Coast." Goodwin also thanked Vice-Presidents Conley, Pope, Lewis and Dyer for their efforts in this situation. Goodwin also thanked the officers of Locals 107, 108, 204 and 4873 in reporting losses.

LESSONS LEARNED

*We, unaccustomed to courage
exiles from delight
live coiled in shells of loneliness
until love leaves its high holy temple
and comes into our sight
to liberate us into life.*

*Love arrives
and in its train come ecstasies
old memories of pleasure
ancient histories of pain.
Yet if we are bold,
love strikes away the chains of fear
from our souls.*

*We are weaned from our timidity
In the flush of love's light
we dare be brave
And suddenly we see
that love costs all we are
and will ever be.
Yet it is only love
which sets us free.*

Maya Angelou



THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;
Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,
And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.
I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

Robert Frost



LESSONS LEARNED

A BAD CASE OF STICKER SHOCK

<http://aol.businessweek.com>

Next year's health benefits will cause you to say "Ouch!" Here's what the most important changes will look like -- and how painful they'll be

More on Health Care

- **45.8 Million in U.S. Now Lack Health Insurance**
- **Health Insurance Cost Rising More Slowly**
- **Do Clinics Favor Insured for Follow-Up Visits?**

If you work for a company that starts its fiscal year on Jan. 1 -- and 70% of employers do -- the 2006 benefits package should soon hit your mailbox. Brace yourself for sticker shock: You may even feel a little sick when you see the combination of higher costs and reduced coverage. That's because your employer is paying an average of 8% more, an extra \$600, for your health insurance in 2006, according to human resources consultant Towers Perrin in Stamford, Conn. And since employers are foisting more of the burden off on employees, your tab will go up even higher: an average \$155 more for health care in 2006, up 10% from 2005. To keep costs in line, there's a good chance you'll be offered the option of a high-deductible plan that lets you choose how you spend your health-care dollars. You can also expect to see higher costs for prescription drugs and larger deductibles. Also new: More companies are offering financial incentives to participate in wellness studies. Here's a look at some of the key changes to 2006 benefits plans and what to consider before signing up:

A Good Plan?

HIGH-DEDUCTIBLE ACCOUNTS

Just a few years ago, these plans -- which make the employee responsible for a bigger portion of their medical costs in exchange for a lower premium -- were scarce. Now 20% of employers offer a high-deductible plan, according to the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. Ray Herschman, a health-care consultant at Mercer Health & Benefits in Cleveland, predicts that half of the companies with 5,000 or more employees will offer a high-deductible plan next year, in addition to more standard choices such as indemnity, point of service, and health maintenance organization (HMO) plans. Some smaller companies may even replace conventional plans with high-deductible versions. High-deductible plans come in two flavors: health reimbursement accounts (HRAs) or health savings accounts (HSAs). The key difference is the HRA is funded by the employers and any unused cash belongs to the company. With the HSA, employees make contributions with pretax dollars -- and employers may or may not match them -- and unused cash belongs to the employee. Because more of the financial burden is on the employee, consultants say more companies will choose HSAs. With either account, employees can expect to pay deductibles of at least \$1,000 for individuals and \$2,000 for families. HSA participants may fund an account well beyond the deductible with pretax contributions up to \$2,650 for individuals and \$5,250 for families. (There's no limit on HRA contributions.) Both plans cover 100% of all medical expenses once the deductible has been reached. And both usually pay 100% of preventive-care costs that don't count toward the deductible. There are no co-payments. Viewed as investments, HSAs are similar to a 401(k) -- the participants choose among an array of investment options. The account's earnings are not taxed -- whatever isn't used is rolled over to the following year.

Health Insurance Basics

- **Health Insurance ABCs**
- **Maintaining Your Benefits**
- **Employee Assistance Plans**
- **Dependent Care Benefits**
- **Using a Cafeteria Plan**
- **More Money 101 Topics**

HRAs and HSAs should appeal to you if you are generally healthy and don't rack up many bills. (The average person spends less than \$700 for health care annually, according to David Stacey, senior consultant at Hewitt Associates (HEW) in Lincolnshire, Ill.) That's why Ron Sussman, president of CPI Cos., a financial-services firm in Voorhees, N.J., plans to add an HSA at his 13-employee company. "The amount of money we are paying for health insurance is ridiculous, and it drives me nuts because we are not using the benefits," says Sussman, 47.

HSAs also are a good tool for self-employed workers who need tax shelters. "You not only get to write off premiums, but you get to make tax-deductible deposits into your HSA," says Steve Sharkey, a brokerage representative at John Alden, a unit of Assurant (AIZ), in Philadelphia.

Before you sign up, pay attention to fees. Some plans charge up to \$50 per year in administrative fees, although larger plans may drop those costs. In addition, look at the underlying investment options to make sure they'll help you meet your savings goals.

Too Much?

CO-PAYS AND DEDUCTIBLES

Those \$15 or \$20 co-payments you shell out for your point-of-service or preferred provider organization plan every time you visit the doctor may disappear for some plan participants. Instead, you'll be required to pay an up-front deductible of about \$300. After you meet that deductible, expect your insurer to pay 90% of any costs if your doctor is within the plan's network. (Insurance often pays only 70% if it's out of network.)

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Co-payments for brand-name drugs (typically \$20 to \$30 each time you fill a prescription) will be about \$5 higher in 2006, although generic-drug co-payments (\$10 to \$15) should be about the same, consultants say. Pharmacy-benefit managers say that fewer than 20% of all employees currently take advantage of mail-order drug plans, but if you use one, you can save as much as half on any medications you take on a continuing basis. Plus, it's convenient. "It's a heck of a lot easier to have the stuff arrive in your mailbox every 30 days," says Tom Billet, a senior consultant at benefits firm Watson Wyatt (WW) in Stamford, Conn.

If you don't go for online purchases, your plan might force you. More employers are implementing mandatory 90-day mail-order programs for maintenance drugs such as Lipitor, a cholesterol-fighting drug, to cut costs. If you take a drug on an ongoing basis, your only option may be to buy three months' worth through the mail. "You can't keep going back to your pharmacy and buying it over and over," Billet explains.

WELLNESS SURVEYS

More companies are asking their employees to fill out online health assessments with financial incentives. At Xerox (XRX), for instance, employees who participate in an online health appraisal earn \$200 in health-care discounts. "After answering questions on stress, their weight, cholesterol, and other health topics, employees who are deemed to be high-risk in three areas are eligible to work with a free health coach," says Kara Choquette, a Xerox spokeswoman.

At international pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca, employees save \$50 a month if they take part in a new online health survey -- a quick \$600 off their annual health-care bill. "In the first 10 days, we already had over 50% of employees participate in the assessment," says Carla Burigatto, an AstraZeneca (AZN) spokeswoman. With health-care benefit costs continuing to move in just one direction, who wouldn't jump at any opportunity to save?





From the **WASHINGTON OFFICE**

By Elwood Hampton, ITPE Vice President/Legislative Director

ITPE continues to be involved in Community Relations as it affects all our members and their families. On October 18, 2005, I attended an overview of the Oil Crisis. That was presented by Chris Peiks, Legislative Committee, Co-Chairman of Economic Development Committee of South Jersey. There are many other cross links and reference sites, which relate to the crisis at our doorstep. Additional new sites seem to appear daily. The problem is all are limited only to internet users and not the general public, which does not use the World Wide Web and is more influenced by mass media. We are not going to make it to an acceptable civilized future if the American public does not hear the story of depletion of finite fossil fuels and plan for an acceptable future lifestyle without plentiful energy.

I repeat again, energy depletion is destined to be the greatest crises ever to face civilization. Yet, the message is hidden or lost in a blitz of bland media coverage supported by hyper advertising of

high-energy products. Our elected leaders either don't understand or are reluctant to address the subject of energy. Unless we act quickly, we may be fossil-fuel bankrupt in another 20 years with very little left for our children. There will be no possibility for a renaissance of an energy-intensive civilization. The earth's original endowment of fossil energy will be gone.

If you question this statement, investigate the references I contend the more you research the subject the more concerned you will become. One rare exception to the above statement about uninformed leadership is Congressman Roscoe Bartlett® from Maryland's six district. Representative Bartlett is one of three scientists in congress and is desperately trying to educate his colleagues about our energy crisis. You can read his reasons for voting "no" on H.R. 6, the Energy Bill, on his website, www.bartlett.house.gov. His unique understanding of the

imminent energy crisis is a welcome start in Washington, a glimmer of hope.

Regard to the Service Contract Act (SCA) A meeting was held with Albert Corvigno, Chairman CSA Labor Relations Committee regarding their recommendations to integrate the Service Contract Act Health and Welfare Fringe Benefits "high" (average) and "low" (per-person) into one rate. The proposals have been forwarded to the Union Labor Committee, Sid Kalban, Esq., ITPE Counsel, Diane Truman, Navy Advisor and The Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division. The Union Labor Committee headed by Darryl Townsend, International Representative has agreed to coordinate a meeting to discuss these proposals sometime before the end of the year. Diane Truman will probably set up a joint meeting of the Union Labor Committee and the Defense Labor Committee. The meeting should take place in the latter part of November. ITPE and other Labor Unions have been involved in seeking

Continued from page 8

relief through our elected officials to have the lifting of the Davis-Bacon Act Suspension imposed by President George W. Bush that affected the prevailing wage laws for the areas hit by Hurricanes Katrina in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Florida.

A question has been raised as to whether this has similar authority under the Service Contract Act.

There is not the same provision in the SCA as in the Davis-Bacon Act, which authorizes the President on the face of the statute to suspend the law "during a national emergency". However, there is a provision in the SCA (Section 4b) which gives the Secretary of Labor the authority to "Provide such reasonable limitations and...make such rules and regulations allowing reasonable variations, tolerances and exemptions to and from any and all provisions of this chapter..., but only in special circumstances where he determines that such...exemption is necessary and proper in the public interest or to avoid the serious impairment of government business, and is in accord with the remedial purposes of this chapter (Service Contract Act) to protect prevailing labor standards."

ITPE's concern was heightened by the fact that this could be extended to the Service Contract Act as the majority of our contracts are under Section (4) C of the Service Contract Act to protect prevailing wage labor standards.

I attended the 25th AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention held in Las Vegas whereas; AFL-CIO President John Sweeney emphasized the following:

In a rousing keynote address to delegates to the 25th AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention, AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney said despite four unions choosing not to attend the AFL-CIO Convention, the federation will continue to work for what the union movement is all about "winning rewards for work, and respect for workers, and working families."

"Pulling out of our convention dishonors the founders and the members of my union," Sweeney said to loud applause. "It is a grievous insult to all the unions who are represented in this hall who came here to discuss and debate the difficult issues and make historic changes."

"But most of all it is a

tragedy for working people," Sweeney said. "Because at a time when our corporate and conservative adversaries have created the most powerful anti-worker machine in the history of our country, a divided movement hurts the hopes of working families for a better life."

Our members must understand their vote elects the various officials to office Local, State and National. The vote, THE ELECTED OFFICIALS understand and will act accordingly.

We urge you to vote in all elections. REMEMBER YOUR VOTE COUNTS ESPECIALLY on November 7, 2006 - SEE YOU ON THE HILL.

In closing, my best wishes for a Joyous Holiday Season



Learn to Conserve Energy and Save Yourselves some \$\$\$

The following energy conservation tips will help you reduce your heating costs as urged by the Southern New Jersey Development Counsel.

- Heat only the rooms you are using-close off vents in unused rooms.
- Have your gas furnace cleaned and serviced by a professional at least once a year making sure to replace filters.
- Keep drapes open during the day to allow sun and closed at night.
- Insulate your home and caulk/ weather strip around doors and windows.
- Install "door shoes" or "sweeps" on drafty doorways.
- Insulate your attic, hot air rises, most heat is lost through improperly insulated attics.
- Wash full loads in your dishwasher and let dishes air dry. Air drying your dishes may reduce your dishwasher's energy usage by 40%.
- Use ceiling fan to circulate warmer air down into the living area.
- Wrap your hot water heater in an insulating jacket.

U.S. Department of Energy -
Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy
www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/EarthEasy -
www.eartheasy.com/



Sandra M. King and Counsel Sid Kalban

Mr. Thomas a former employee of Myers Investigative Service who worked at the Hoffman Building, Won an arbitration case which began in December 2003. Mr. Thomas was awarded a substantial amount of money thanks to the hard work of ITPEU Representative,

CASE CLOSED!!!!



Amelia and Ernesto Sagun started working at the US Nava Academy, Annapolis, MD in July of 1993, they both recently retired this past July. Millie and Ernie not only worked serving the Midshipmen in King Hall, but also serviced at many special events which included the superintendent's residence. During their years at the academy they worked all types of events ranging from casual to fine dining and served such VIP's as Admirals John Ryan and Charles Larson, VP Richard Chaney, Senator John McCain and Presidents George Bull and Bill Clinton. The Superintendent of the Naval Academy gave them a signed photograph. EC Management presented Millie with an engraved silver photo album and Ernie an engraved silver serving tray. Pictured Ernie Sagun, Samuel Bavaro, Project Manager for EC Management Service, and Millie Sagun

TEXAS ITPE

Howdy, From Texas



Jewel Simpson, proud member of ITPEU. Employed in Galveston, TX at the Post Office.



WW Contractors LaBranch/Mickey Leland Houston, TX

Rufus Haynes, Maria Zamora, Sandy Barelos (Shop Steward), Soledad Alvarez, Maria Bautista, Lillie Transaw, Maria Morales, Ana Chavaria



ITPEU is taking this opportunity to WELCOME one of our newest Representatives to the San Antonio Office. Ms. Bailey brings a wealth of food service experiences which will greatly benefit our very valued members. Lena, Welcome!



WW Contractors Rusk St. Houston, TX

Debra Alford, Edna Smith, Victory Taylor. Josephine Gardine, Herbert henderson, Kenneth Charles, Charles Adams, Elvia White (Shop Steward), Eric Viltz, Talmadge Crain



WW Contractors Alliance Houston, TX

First Row: Ampora Flores, Zoila Melendez (Shop Steward), Cecelia Melgan, Rodnika Hudson,
Second Row: Petrona Lopez, Frank Galvez, Petula Chandler, Sergio Dessources



TEXAS ITPE AREAS continued from page 11



The young lady that is pictured and accepting my money order (check) is Ms. Stacey Wright, she the Health & Safety Training Manager for the American Red Cross Branch Office, El Paso, Texas. I am standing by just in case the Red Cross needs me to volunteer my services to assist the displaced evacuees that came to our fair City. ITPE area members have been donating their time and monies and doing part when need. Thank you all for a job well done.

NOW IS THE TIME...



}

LOTO



Union Plus: Member Benefits



Union Plus benefits are developed and managed by Union Privilege, which was founded by the AFL-CIO in 1986 to provide consumer benefit programs to union members. No dues money goes into the development or operation of any Union Plus programs.

Advocate for Union Members

Union members don't have to deal with complaints or problems on their own. If members haven't been able to get issues resolved with Union Plus program suppliers, they can contact a Member Advocate, who will contact the program supplier and work with them to resolve any problems as quickly as possible.

Program Development

Union Privilege uses the collective purchasing power of over 13 million union members to develop the Union Plus programs, which provide more quality, value and service than comparable programs available to the general public.

Special Union Features

The Union Plus program includes unique features designed for union members. For example, during prolonged strikes or lockouts, qualified members who have a mortgage through the Union Plus Mortgage and Real Estate program are granted assistance. Members also are allowed to skip Union Plus Credit Card, Loan and Life Insurance.

Unions Choose Programs

While Union Privilege develops, oversees and markets these money-saving Union Plus programs, it remains up to each international union to choose the programs it will endorse. **To make sure you are up-to-date on all the programs your Union offers, check out the website at www.unionplus.org**



Greetings from the WEST COAST

By John Brenton, III, Secretary-Treasurer

Once again it is time to give thanks to our heavenly Father for all the wonderful things that He has furnished us with this year.

Two thousand five has been a good year and a not so good year. My prayers and hopefully yours are still going out to the hurricane victims (some of which are ITPE members) in the Gulf.

This year I had the honor of attending the AFL-CIO convention in Chicago. Although I was thrilled to be there I was saddened by the separation of some of the larger unions. This was not the time, nor the place for labor to show anything but solidarity.

We as have face year. Th canes, th reform (c never-enc care. Thi our differ one peop

I have and as m have been ITPE Hea

Over years th great ad ITPE He We have day stay scale Ma includes

dental, and optometry.

However, these improvements came too fast and medical inflation was too furious. The Board of Trustees met and realized they had to stop the bleeding.

The Board contacted Blue Cross and Blue Shield, but because of jurisdictional problems they could not accept the ITPE. Beechstreet seemed to be the answer.

But Beechstreet was not the answer. About this time Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans joined to form a group called Wellpoint and they decided to allow us to use (for pay) their network.

So now we start again,

However, as in es will again be then this Plan. to be patient. I are not in this e ITPE officials ad by this Plan fects the same

Pension Fund Annual Benefit pering. There olarships avail- ke this the edu-

I had the privi- ng Vice Presi- lones and her am consisting aveau, Charley

Cribbs, Nick Digiacco, Andrew Tunomie, Steve Crisci, Steve Moulton, and Mike Warzlow with their contract negotiation with Henderson taxi. It was exciting to see these brave members sit across the table and face management with their demands.

The Henderson taxi CBA was ratified on October 5, 2005 by a vote of almost 2 to 1. Again I thank the brave men and woman who fought so hard on behalf of their brothers and sisters.

So as you see its been a good and not so good year. However, I look to the future with the knowledge that things can be changed and together we can make it happen.

Happy holidays to all

Until that time,
Fraternally
John Brenton



West Coast areas



Michael Reed, Supervisor, Civilian Cooks, JoJan Alaneda, Supervisor, KP Staaff (Shofield Barricks, K-Quad Dinning Facility) Congratulating one another, staff and miliary cooks, for a job well done. K-Quad won the National Connelly Award for "Best Dinning Facility in Hawaii", this past June. They are now in competition for "Best Dinning Facility in the Pacific Rim,"

A Great Team Effort



Welcome

To the newest ITPE Representative, Trina Campbell. Ms. Campbell served her apprenticeship as an ITPE - Shop Steward at Fort Bragg, NC where she displayed a tremendous interest in Labor Reations. She also served an apprenticeship at the ITPE - San Antonio Branch. She is now assigned to represent ITPE Contracts in Washington, Oregon, Montana and Alaska. In addition. to that she has also targeted two or three contacts sites for organizing.

News from NORTH CAROLINA & WEST VIRGINIA

By Representative Cindy Diehm Cheryl Lowe, Assistant Representative

This office was privileged to attend the North Carolina AFL-CIO convention in September at Asheville, N.C. We met the President of the N.C. AFL-CIO, James Andrews and the convention was addressed by the President of the National AFL-CIO Mr. John Sweeney. It was a great experience and we learned a lot about other Unions in N.C. Seminars were held and were very informative and we enjoyed the fellowship of other Union members from throughout North Carolina.

At the end of September we attended the Central Carolinas Labor Council Conference at Myrtle Beach S.C. We attended seminars on harassment issues, legal issues, security in the workplace and arbitration issues. They were very informative and gave us better ideas in handling these issues for our members.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

Congratulations to Viola Harris and Jennifer Jenkins. These two ladies just made twenty years on the job at Womack Army Hospital. They were presented with flowers and a Twenty year Pin from ITPEU. Congratulations to Kum Cobb and Dau Harris. These two ladies

also made twenty years on the job on the Ft. Bragg food service contract. They were presented with flowers and a twenty year pin from ITPEU.

SPECIAL RECONITION!

We would like to recognize Ella Jacobs. Ella went to work on the food service contract on Ft. Bragg over thirty years ago. Due to a seven month layoff with one contractor and the contract changed over to a new contractor during her layoff she was brought back in as a new hire. Except for that seven month layoff Ella would have been with this contract over thirty years. Congratulations Ella!!!

Negotiations for the 2005 year went very well. Raises were implemented along with fringe benefits.

We had several change of contractors this year. The janitorial contract at Pope Air Force Base held by Hilton Head Housecare, was taken by Integrity National Corporation, President: Antoninus Hines from Greenbelt Md., the food service contract at Elizabeth City Coast Guard Station held by Ronlyn Corp., was taken by

Nayyarsons Corp., President: Anil Nayyar from New Hyde Park, N.Y., the Audio-Visual contract in R.T.P. held by Transcontinental Ent., was taken by Integrated Solutions & Services Unlimited Inc., President: Clarence McGill Jr. from Cincinnati, Ohio, the Glassware contract at R.T.P. held by Transcontinental Ent., was taken by Evergreen Consulting, President: Heath Carroll from Greenville, N.C., and the security guard contract at Parkersburg, W.Va held by G.C.R., was taken by Security Consultants Group, Inc., President: Marsha Langford from Oak Ridge, Tn. We would like to welcome all of the above contractors to our area and hope to have a good working relationship with all of these contractors for the mutual benefit of all our members employed by them.

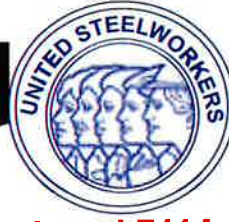
We hope that each and everyone of you have a great Christmas holiday and a Happy New Year. Those of you in West Virginia, snuggle down deep and stay warm in all that snow.



WORKING TOGETHER



Local 4873



Local 711A



Front Row: Mike Warzlow, Henderson Taxi; Carl "Smokey" Tucker, Checker Cab; Ruthie Jones, ITPE Vice President; John Conley, ITPE President; John Brenton, ITPE Secretary/Treasurer; Karla Hiropoulous, Checker Cab; Virginia Deveau, Henderson Taxi.
Back Row: David Summers, Star Cab; Max Kramer, Yellow Cab; Stan Rosenberg, Star Cab.



Conference Attendees Las Vegas

A UNION ALLIANCE AT WORK

On September 13, 2005, the first annual taxi and limousine drivers conference was held at the Riviera Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, NV. The conference included a list of speakers. Each addressed many of the issues of importance to the industry.

The ITPE and the USW Union collectively represent approximately 5000 Taxi/Limousine drivers in Las Vegas, NV. The alliance has had a tremendous impact on the taxi drivers.

Their voices are now being heard not only in Las Vegas but also in Carson City.

The conference was well attended by the drivers of both ITPE and the US Steelworkers and many drivers of the six non-union companies. We are hopeful this will lead to all Las Vegas drivers to support either the ITPE or the US Steelworkers. The Union needs you and you need the Union. Add your voice to that of the current Union members. Join today.



L-R: Hussein Abdelgilil, President USWA Local 711-A, LV, NV; John Conley, ITPE President; Ruthie Jones, ITPE Vice President

Nevada State Senator Dina Titus; John Conley, ITPE President.

Senator Titus is currently a candidate for Governor for the State of Nevada



What is An American?

By Peter Ferrara

You probably missed it in the rush of news last month but there was actually a report that someone in Pakistan had published in a newspaper there an offer of a reward to anyone who killed an American, any American. So I just thought I would write to let them know what an American is, so they would know when they found one.

An American is English...or French, or Italian, Irish, German, Spanish, Polish, Russian or Greek. An American may also be African, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Australian, Iranian, Asian or Arab, or Pakistani or Afghan.

An American is Christian, or he could be Jewish, or Buddhist, or Muslim. In fact, there are more Muslims in American than in Afghanistan. The only difference is that in America they are free to worship as each of them chooses.

An American is also free to believe in no religion. For that, he will answer only to God, not to the government or to armed thugs claiming to speak for the government and for God.

An American is from the most prosperous land in the history of the world. The root of that prosperity can be found in the Declaration of Independence, which recognizes the God-given right of each man and woman to the pursuit of happiness.

An American is generous. Americans have helped out just about every other nation in the world in their time of need. When Afghanistan was overrun by the Soviet army 20 years ago, Americans came with arms and supplies to enable the people to win back their country. As of the morning of September 11, American had given more than any other nation to the poor in Afghanistan.

An American does not have to obey mad ravings of ignorant, ungodly cruel, old men. American men will not be fooled into giving up their lives to kill innocent people, so that these foolish old men may hold on to power. American women are free to show their beautiful faces to the world, as each of them chooses.

An American is free to criticize his government's officials when they are wrong, in his or her own opinion. Then he is free to replace them, by majority vote. Americans welcome people from all lands, all creatures, all religions, because they are not afraid. They are not afraid that their history, their religion, their beliefs will be overrun, or forgotten. That is because they know they are free to hold to their religion, their beliefs, their history, as each of them chooses.

And just as Americans welcome all, they enjoy the best that everyone has to bring, from all over the world. The best science, the best technology, the best products, the best books, the best music, the best food, the best athletes.

Americans welcome the best, but they also welcome the least. The national symbol of American (the Statue of Liberty) welcomes your tired and your poor, the wretched refuse of your teeming shores, the homeless tempest tossed.

These, in fact, are the people who built America. Many of them were working in the twin towers the morning of September 11, 2001; earning a better life for their families.

So you can try to kill an American if you must. Hitler did. So did General Tojo and Stalin and Mao Tse-Tung and every bloodthirsty tyrant in the history of the world. But in doing so, you would be just be killing yourself. Because Americans are not a particular people from a particular place. They are the embodiment of human spirit of freedom. Everyone who holds to that spirit everywhere is an American. So look around you. You may find more Americans in your land that you thought were there. One day they will rise up and overthrow the old, ignorant, tired tyrants that trouble too many lands. Then those lands too, will join the community of free and prosperous nations. And American will welcome them.

NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES COVERED BY UNION SHOP AGREEMENTS

The Industrial Technical & Professional Employees Union, AFL-CIO ("ITPE") represents employees throughout the country and assists them by negotiating better wages, benefits and other conditions of employment and by pursuing meritorious grievances. All but a small portion of the ITPE's financial resources are spent on these and related activities. That remaining, small portion is used for organizing, support for political activities and community services. All of these activities are for the benefit of the members of this Union.

Many workers represented by ITPE are in units covered by collective bargaining agreements which include union shop clauses. Those are provisions which require the covered workers to be members of or otherwise provide financial support to ITPE. This annual notice is to advise those employees about their rights and obligations concerning membership and payment of Union dues. This notice will assist you in understanding the advantages and benefits of union membership and provides you with information on your obligations if you choose not to be a full member and instead to pay a non-member fee.

Benefits of Union Membership

All employees covered by an ITPE collective bargaining agreement, including non-members, receive the protections and benefits of that agreement. However, only members are entitled to attend Union meetings, to serve as shop stewards, to nominate and vote for candidates for Union office or Convention Delegate and to run and be elected to any of those positions. Only members are allowed to participate in the development of contract proposals and Union policies.

Dues for ITPE membership and a full voice in the Union are only \$25.00 per month. In all but a few instances, you have the convenience of having your employer deduct the dues from your paycheck and send the money to the ITPE.

Non-Member Fees

Employees who are covered by a union shop clause but choose not to be ITPE members must pay non-member fees. These fees cover the ITPE's services related to the collective bargaining process and representation, such as negotiation of collective bargaining agreements, enforcement and administration of those agreements, meetings with employees and employers, and representation of employees in grievance and arbitration proceedings. Excluded from the services covered by the non-member fees are the costs of any community service and of political activities. Also excluded from the current calculation are the ITPE's organizing costs and publication expenses.

The ITPE had certified public accountants review its expenditures for calendar year 2003 and determine the percentage of those expenses which are chargeable to non-members (and, thus, included in the fee) and which are nonchargeable (and therefore excluded). It determined that the chargeable costs were 83.3124% of the ITPE's expenditures for that year (i.e., the nonchargeable costs were 16.6876%).

Applying this percentage to the \$25.00 per month dues paid by full ITPE members, **the non-member fee is \$20.80 per month for the period from January 1, 2006, through December 31, 2005.** As noted above, any employee who chooses to pay the non-member fee instead of full Union dues has no voice in any ITPE affairs.

Please note that since the chargeable and nonchargeable expenses may change from year to year, the non-member fee may also fluctuate each year. Individuals who elect to pay the non-member fee rather than membership dues must do so each year by filing an objection in accordance with the procedure set forth below.

NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES COVERED BY UNION SHOP AGREEMENTS

Filing of Objections

Anyone who objects to paying membership dues (and who will, instead, pay the non-member fee) must file an objection annually. That objection must be filed in writing with the ITPE Dues Objection Administration, ITPE Headquarters, 2222 Bull Street, Suite 200, Savannah, GA 31401. Any non-member who is currently covered by a union shop clause and who objects to paying membership dues for calendar year 2005 must file that objection no later than January 31, 2005. (An employee who first becomes covered by a union shop clause after December 31, 2004, and any member who resigns from full ITPE membership will have thirty days from notification of the option to pay a non-member fee in which to file an objection.)

Any employee who files an objection will be sent a detailed description of how the non-member fee was calculated, including further information regarding for which categories of expenditures they will be charged and for which they will not be charged. They will also be informed of the procedure to be used by anyone who wishes to challenge the calculation.

Fraternally,
John Brenton III
Secretary-Treasurer

Fight for Good Wages and Health Care *News From the AFL-CIO*

AFL-CIO Executive Council, meeting for first time on Oct. 6 since federation's July convention, approved request by 10 unions in Arts, Entertainment, Media and Telecommunications industries to create new Industry Coordinating Committee (ICC). Establishment of ICCs was among more sweeping reforms approved by AFL-CIO convention in July. Arts, Entertainment, Media and Telecommunications ICC are first announced since convention. Group will seek to develop organizing plan as well as contract standards. "Those professionals who work in the arts, entertainment, media and telecommunications industries need a strong, United effort to address their issues in the face of ownership consolidation and unprecedented changes and today, they're one big step closer to winning more power," said AFL-CIO President John Sweeney.

Labor urged Senate to adopt minimum wage increase as proposed last month by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.). Kennedy amendment would have raised minimum wage in three steps from \$5.15 to \$6.25 hourly. But Senate Republicans, for second time this year, voted against giving nation's lowest-paid workers a pay raise, killing Kennedy's proposal by 51-47 vote. Kennedy had earlier proposed moving minimum wage to \$7.25 over two years but Senate Republicans blocked vote on measure. In 2005, current full-time, year-round minimum wage workers will earn \$5,378 less than the \$16,090 needed to lift family of three out of poverty. "There is simply no excuse for members of Congress to turn down a raise in our nation's pitifully low minimum wage, especially when they are poised to give themselves the eighth pay raise since the last time they increased the U.S. worker's minimum wage in 1997," said AFL-CIO's Sweeney.

AFL-CIO led nationwide phone bank campaign Oct. 17 and 18 to oppose some \$50 billion in budget cuts proposed by congressional Republicans. According to federation sources, hundreds of thousands of activists called their senators and representatives to reject budget priorities of Republican extremists and Bush administration. They urged "a new direction for America-one that puts people first and invests in good jobs, health care for all, schools, hospitals and highways." Congressional Republicans and Bush administration want to cut massive federal deficit by slashing as much as \$50 billion in vital safety net programs while, at the same time, protect funding that will finance \$70 billion in tax cuts for the wealthy- Republican leadership claims cuts in health care, education, housing, nutrition assistance and unemployment insurance will help pay for Gulf Coast recovery efforts following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

AFL-CIO Executive Council Oct. 6 voted to reinstate 68,000-member United Transportation Union, which left federation in 2000. UTU represents workers in railroad, bus, and aviation industries. Union previously had left federation in 1986 for three years. UTU spokesman Frank Wilner told news media that union's return to AFL-CIO is dependent upon UTU members approving dues increase "because we could not afford to continue defending against membership raids by the Teamsters and rejoin the federation." Union's last convention delegates voted on dues increase of \$5 per month by mail ballots which ended Oct. 30. Last year, newly elected UTU President Paul Thompson and AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney began informal discussions on move to return to federation.

REPORT OF ROY J. BOYD, ITPE FUNDS REPRESENTATIVE

It is always painful to report changes in benefits to the participants of a Health and Welfare Plan in situations that require benefit reductions. Yet, it is comforting to know that you have a Fund Board of Trustee and a Union that responds in a responsible manner to assure that you and your family will not be financially wiped out through extensive medical expenses. During the past four years, the ITPE Health and Welfare Fund has provided ever increasing benefits to its participants to cope with an alarming increase in costs of medical care. During the last few years the Fund has increased medical benefits from a plan that would pay out up to a maximum calendar year benefit per participant in the best benefit schedule from approximately \$60,000 to \$91,000. At the same time, medical inflation has been increasing at a rate of approximately 12% per year. That means a medical service that cost \$1,000 four years ago now cost \$1,500 - \$1,600. It is now common to see Hospital bills of \$60,000 to \$100,000 ranges.

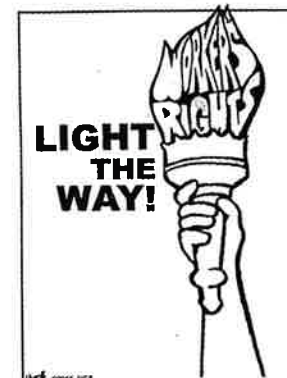
The ITPE Health and Welfare Fund even joined a PPO network in an effort to cope with ever increasing medical costs!

The overall majority of you cooperated in seeking the PPO participating hospitals and doctors. These moves made possible the coverage you have enjoyed.

The ITPEU and your employer's negotiated Health and Welfare contribution increases plus your use of the PPO network were still not enough to keep up with continuing medical cost increases. A decision had to be made as how to best provide our participants the best security from devastating medical costs.

The ITPE Health and Welfare Fund Board of Trustees did much deliberation before making the decision for the October 1, 2005 changes. The Plan changes made by the Trustees will be the least painful but necessary benefit reduction to participants. You have all been mailed correspondence explaining the changes. My biggest concern for you at the moment is to make sure you seek Blue Cross and Blue Shield PPO doctors and hospitals for your medical services beginning November 1st. By the time you read this article, you should have gotten a Blue Cross and Blue Shield ID card with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield logo for each covered member of your family. If you did not receive an ID card for yourself or a covered family member, contact the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia office immediately at 1-800-628-3988.

Be patient. Take comfort in the fact that your Fund Trustees have taken necessary steps to assure your stability in receiving Health Care Benefits. You will now be afforded a broader network of PPO medical providers. Your Union will continue to negotiate Health and Welfare contributions to meet the demands of your medical needs.



COMMUNITIES DO BETTER WHEN UNIONS ARE STRONGER

Statistics show states in which more people are union members are states with higher wages, better benefits and better schools. While unions are just one factor affecting the quality of living, the pattern indicates that when workers have a voice at work, the community also benefits. And when employers interfere in workers' decision to join a union, the community loses—living standards decline and income inequality grows.

TEN STRONGEST UNION STATES COMPARED WITH THE TEN WEAKEST

	10 States Where Unions Are Strongest	10 States Where Unions Are Weakest
Average hourly earnings, 2000	\$15.61	\$12.49
Average household income, 2000	\$46,378	\$38,854
Percent of population with no medical insurance, 1999-2000	11.8%	15.1%
Public education spending per pupil, 2000-2001	\$8,265	\$5,774
Percent of eligible voters who voted in presidential election, 2000	55.2%	49.2%
Crimes per 100,000 people	4,114	4,694
Percent of population in poverty, 1999	10.6%	13.3%
Maximum weekly unemployment insurance benefit in 2002	\$379	\$296
Maximum weekly workers' compensation benefit in 2001	\$675	\$486
Workplace fatality rate in 2000 (per 100,000 workers)	4.6	6.3

Ten States Where Unions Are Strongest (based on percentage of workforce with a union): New York, Hawaii, Alaska, Michigan, New Jersey, Washington, Illinois, Rhode Island, Ohio, Minnesota

Ten States Where Unions Are Weakest (based on percentage of workforce with a union): North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Texas, Mississippi, Arizona, South Dakota, Arkansas, Florida, Utah

Sources: Kathleen O'Leary and Scott Morgan *State Rankings, 2001*, U.S. Census Bureau, *Income of Households by State in 2000*, Kaiser Family Foundation Health Fact Online, *Percent of Uninsured, 1999-2000*, Voter turnout in 2000 from www.fairvote.org/tournout/preturnstate.htm; Unemployment insurance benefits in 2002 from Maurice Ensellem, Jessica Goldberg, Rick McHugh, Wendell Primus, Rebecca Smith and Jeffrey Wenger; *Failing the Unemployed, A State-By-State Examination of Unemployment Insurance Systems*, March 12, 2002, Economic Policy Institute, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and National Employment Law Project Workers' compensation benefits in 2001 from AFL-CIO, *Workers' Compensation and Unemployment Insurance Benefits Under State Law*, January 1, 2001; Workplace fatality rates from AFL-CIO, "Death on the Job: The Toll of Neglect" April 2002.

Attend

Union Meetings

An informed Member makes for a
better member

www.itpe.org



"My boy."

Senate again fails to raise minimum wage by Jim Abrams

WASHINGTON - Senate proposals to raise the minimum wage were rejected Wednesday, making it unlikely that the lowest allowable wage, \$5.15 an hour since 1997, will rise in the foreseeable future. A labor-backed measure by Sen. Edward Kennedy would have raised the minimum to \$6.25 over an 18-month period. A Republican counterproposal would have combined the same \$1.10 increase with various breaks and exemptions for small businesses.

Kennedy, D-Mass., said Hurricane Katrina demonstrated the depth of poverty in the country and he pointed out that a single parent with two children working a minimum wage earns \$10,700 a year, \$4,500 below the poverty line. He said it was "absolutely unconscionable" that in the same period that Congress has denied a minimum wage increase, lawmakers have voted themselves seven pay raises worth \$28,000.

But republican opponents, echoing the arguments of business groups, said higher minimum wages can work against the poor if they force small businesses to cut payrolls or go out of business.

CONTACTS

www.itpe.org & www.itpebenefits.com
VISIT NOW

Take A Look

Your Union offices are spread throughout the United States. Get to know your Shop Steward and your Union Representatives by name. Get to know the phone number of the Union office closest to you. Above all make sure you go to your Union meetings when they are held in your area. In true Union spirit, an informed member is the best member.

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