

METTLE POST

Issue No. 54



Winter 2014



By Doug May

Most people living near a river city in America might view a major bridge crossing as nothing more than a utilitarian structure designed in appearance and purpose to merely move vehicles from land on one side of the water to the other. Nothing special about them in most cases, unless you're looking at architectural achievements or a major infrastructure bridge project that has been constructed within the past decade.

**OUT WITH THE OLD
IN WITH THE NEW (SORT OF)**

GRANGE CITY STEEL SINCE 1878

History was made on March 2, 1981 when the first slab was produced at the No. 1 Continuous Caster. A significant turning point will be transitioning this year as a Twin Strand Caster will be engineered into the footprint of No. 1 after 33 years of making quality steel as a single strand machine.

U.S. Steel CEO Mario Longhi announced on Jan. 28, 2014, "This upgrade will enhance our commercial opportunities at GCW as a substrate supplier to the energy sector."

No. 1 Caster Crew during training, before startup—hence incomplete PPE. Left to Right: Joe Dallas, Gary Brock and Jim Bradford. Jim Gibbons is down in the mold.

First heat to be worked at No. 1 Caster Stir Station.

The newly opened "Stan Musial Veterans Memorial Bridge" joining St. Louis with the Illinois metro area is more than just ordinary and functional. It is the third longest cable-stayed bridge in the U.S. It is, in fact, architecturally appealing. It's also noteworthy to mention that it was built during an era in our country when U.S. roads and bridges are crumbling, and a divisive political climate interferes with getting big projects like this done.

What makes the completion of the 'Stan Span' and all the new approach ramps even more appealing for members of 1899 & 50 who were in attendance for the ribbon cutting ceremony on Saturday February 8, 2014 is the recognition that the steel used in the construction was all Made in America.

The USW Rapid Response Info Alerts or the stories posted to www.local1899 and our 1899 Facebook have described how using domestically sourced steel for bridge construction in the U.S. is no small achievement. If you have followed our posts covering the disastrous story that unfolded over the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge project – the one that finally opened years late and a few billion dollars over budget -- you would be familiar with their poor judgment and regretful decision to use foreign steel. Quality control managers found thousands of cracks in welds produced by a Chinese contractor for the span's signature tower and roadway. This contributed to massive cost overruns and ridiculous delays.

To add insult to unemployed American's injury, the upper deck for the iconic Verrazano-Narrows Bridge in New York will soon be replaced with 15,000 tons of Chinese steel.

However, with any celebration, there is always someone willing to ruin a good party. If so inclined, you can hear those party-poopers 24/7 on right wing radio and FOX News doing their best to whip taxpayers into a foaming, raging taxpayer victim's complex frenzy. The unfortunate theme that resonates in today's politics of blocking the U.S. from Eisenhower-style of doing big things in America has contributed to prolonged unemployment and our crumbling infrastructure.

Continued on page 4



Welcome to the New Year

By Dan Simmons

Once again we start the New Year with optimism that this year will be better than the one before. The forecast as of now is a good one with our Hot Band order book strong. One of our biggest drivers being the Texas Lone Star, which is U.S. Steel's pipe and tube operation. Cold Roll coating is starting to rebound from a sluggish winter, slowed mostly due to weather. The overall forecast is that 2014 will be a strong year for us as far as orders here at Granite City Works.

Agreement Reached Establishing Carpenter Position

In 2003, the new contract with U. S. Steel did away with the group we all knew as Carpenters, Painters and Blacksmiths. This work was to be absorbed by the Maintenance Technicians Mechanics as member's incumbent to those positions left the workforce due to attrition. Since then, we have tried continually to restore this group and its work through multiple meetings and rounds of bargaining with our counterparts in Training. I am pleased to announce that our persistence has paid off, and that we have been successful in reaching an agreement that will recreate the position of Carpenter at the Mill. In addition, for the first time ever in the history of GCW, a negotiated Carpenter training program will be established. Bids are currently posted for full-fledged Carpenters with future Carpenter Training Program bids to follow. This group still remains a part of the Utility, Services & Yard Department.

Changes Take Effect within Security Unit

During the first part of January we saw a major transformation in our Plant Protection Department. The Local 1899 represented Guards will no longer be carrying firearms. The head of U.S. Steel Corporate Plant Protection has made the decision to remove weapons at most all USS facilities, except during times when they may be necessary due to unusual circumstances. This is certainly a new direction; and as such, will take some time before we can see just how this change plays out. Ironically, this move comes at a time in which the state of Illinois has instated a new law regarding concealing and carrying weapons by citizens. This new law significantly changes members' rights and plant rules concerning the possession of weapons. See more on this topic in the Grievance Report.

Contract Negotiations with Tube City Unit

A recent Contract Ratification vote for a new contract with the members of the Tube City Unit of Local 1899 was voted down. Their Contract expired on August 31, 2013. They have been working under an extension of their old contract as negotiations continued. The committee has met and tried to address a few concerns the membership raised. We are scheduling another vote, and hopefully by the time you are reading this article, we will have a new contract.

Contract Negotiations with GCS Credit Union

The GCS Federal Credit Unit of 1899 has a contract expiration date of July 31, 2014. We will soon be kicking off negotiations with Management that represents the GCS Federal Credit Union. As always, we have full expectations that it will be a smooth one. Stay tuned, as we will update you as negotiations progress.

Two SCHOLARSHIPS: One with a value of \$5,200.00 to be awarded by the United Steelworkers, District 7, Sub District 2, Officers Council and another worth \$4,000.00 by USW Local 1899 on the basis of a competitive scholarship examination.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Any member of a high school class graduating between January 1, 2014 and July 1, 2014, and who is either a member, the son or daughter of a member.

HOW TO APPLY: Applicants must complete the forms available at the Labor Temple. **CLOSING DATE:** March 11, 2014.

Gate Collection for Family of Fatally Injured Steelworker Raises \$3,461.69

By Randy Virgin, Joint Efforts Coordinator

A special gate collection conducted by Local Unions 50, 68, and 1899 on Wednesday, January 22, 2014 for the family of Antonino Palazzolo was very successful. Brother Palazzolo, 32, was fatally injured December 15, 2013 at USS Great Lakes Works when a ladle of molten iron spilled causing an explosion.

Brother Palazzolo a BOF remote control train operator, leaves behind a wife and two small children, ages 3 and 10 months. Antonino had worked at the Michigan mill for just two years.

The generosity displayed by Granite City Works employees was overwhelming. Our gate collections raised \$3,461.69.

In addition, during their monthly meeting, the Granite City Steelworkers Organization for Active Retirees, (SOAR), raised \$500.00 through individual member contributions as well as members donating back the winnings of several 50/50 drawings. Combined with the gate collections, the total raised for the Palazzolo family was \$3,961.69. Thank you to all who contributed!

Number of 2014 Retirements Set Brisk Pace

The New Year brings with it a significant number of members retiring, after exhausting their weeks of 2014 vacation. At time of publication, as many as 31 members are currently scheduled to retire within the first two months of the year. Based on scheduled vacation weeks, we could see as many as 53 members total retire by the end of February.

The majority of members are taking advantage of Rule-of-85 Pension eligibility. This option allows members to retire earlier than the regular retirement age of 65, due to the Union negotiating that our past National Steel service be purchased by U.S. Steel for determining "R85" eligibility.

Expectations for hiring in 2014 are promising as a result of the rate of retirements. USS only takes employment applications via their on-line website. We post news of the Company's intentions, when we are aware of potential application acceptance periods, on our Local Union website: www.local1899.org.

Attention New Members: You Can File for Spousal Insurance Premium Reimbursement

If your spouse is offered health insurance by her/his employer (other than U. S. Steel or its subsidiaries), and that employer pays any part of the cost, your spouse must take the insurance as her/his primary carrier. Whether or not your spouse enrolls in the "other plan", the health care benefits payable under the USS Program will be reduced as though enrollment in the other employer's plan had occurred. However, any spouse who is required to pay premiums for insurance coverage in excess of \$50 per month will be reimbursed by the Company for such excess up to a maximum benefit of \$350 per month. You may file for reimbursement on a quarterly or annual basis.

To be eligible for payment, any claim for reimbursement must be filed by June 30th of the year following the year in which the premiums apply. If eligible, you will be notified by mail when to approximately expect your reimbursement, which will be included on one of your pay checks.

Membership Information Update

We are in the process of updating our Membership information. Anyone that has changed their address, or has changed their home telephone number, or changed/ added a cell phone number; please contact Lauren at the Labor Temple office with these changes.





will be notified the first week of March.

It is important that our legislators hear from us on this very important action. We must urge them to support the National Infrastructure Development Bank Act (HR 2553).

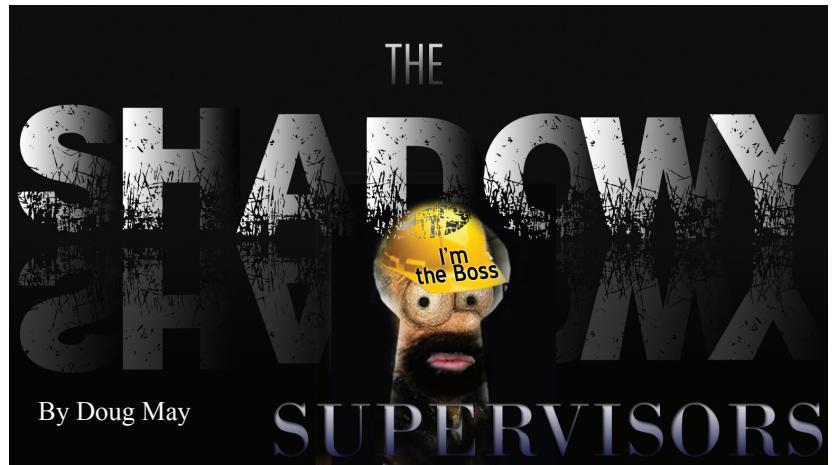
Other USW Rapid Response News includes a new Illinois law for 2014 that permits 17 year olds to register and vote in a primary election if they will be 18 by the general election.

In closing, your Local 1899 Rapid Response Committee will be heading to Washington D.C. the week of a February 9-13 to meet with hundreds of our fellow USW Rapid Response members at this year's USW RR Conference. We will be attending some workshops throughout the week followed by a session to the nation's Capitol to meet one-one-one with our area Representatives.

I have appointments set up to meet with Senator Dick Durbin-IL. and Senator Mark Kirk-IL. in addition to meeting with Illinois Representatives Rodney Davis of the 13th Congressional District IL, John Shimkus 19th CD-IL and Bill Enyart 12th CD-IL. We are all looking forward to meeting with them and reporting back to our members their thoughts on some of our concerns.

We still have some room left on the Local 1899 Rapid Response Committee if anyone is interested. Contact local 1899 office at 452-1899 and leave your name and contact number and we will get you on board.

Thanks Terry Biggs
Rapid Response/PAC/1899 Chairman



our own safety in the workplace. We also understand the perennial message that is presented to us in safety school, videos and in print – watch out for your co-workers. If you see him putting himself in a hazardous situation, become proactive, step in and point out his error before he makes a painful mistake.

Lines are crossed when this safety principle becomes distorted and a supervisor concocts a premeditated game and hides in the shadows, lurking, waiting for that perfect 'Gotcha' moment to catch a worker in what they perceive as a safety violation, purely for the sick satisfaction of imposing discipline. This is not only wrong, but it makes a mockery of what should be a valued safety program.

It's indisputable that with all the inherent danger in a steel mill, a comprehensive safety program developed between labor and management should be practiced and respected everyday. The company surely recognizes they cannot spend their way or brow-beat employees into safety procedure compliance. Trust and the belief in a safety program in its entirety can only be nurtured by respectfully working with, not against, our USW members. All employees should be encouraged to successfully adhere to safe work practices to achieve such goals as eliminating lost time injuries.

But when our USW members are suspended because of what amounts to an archaic power grab, and IR upholds the suspension with a wink and a nod toward management, this permissive action causes immeasurable harm to what most employees really want to believe in.

I think we can all agree safety in the workplace should never be compromised. And that rule should also apply to defiant, ladder-climbing freshman supervisors, as well. Focus is a key element to completing our job assignments safely and a hostile work environment creates distracted workers. Besides, with all the hives of cameras mounted throughout the buildings watching our every move, is it really a good use of company resources for a manager and supervisor to waste time, just for the sake of boosting their ego or their perceived status, by attempting to intimidate someone by snagging them in their nefarious net?

This is a lousy way to waste U.S. Steel's stakeholder money, and it comes with the very real risk of losing employee confidence in what could be a respected safety program.

Our latest USW Rapid Response **Invest in America Infrastructure** action was a big hit! This legislation will help us push for jobs, invest in our country's safety and build a stronger economic future.

I want to thank our members for taking the time to fill out the cards. One portion will go to our legislators and the other side enters you for a chance to win a trip for two to Las Vegas. Winner of the trip



Highlights of interest to GCW
4th Quarter 2013
U.S. Steel Income Report From
CEO Mario Longhi.

- 2014 is expected to be much better than 2013
- The Carnegie Project is expected to save USS \$150 million in 2014
- Service Center inventories in better position than last 4 yrs. Construction is encouraging
- Duties for the U.S. Department of Commerce/ITC on dumped OCTG expected mid Feb. with retroactive penalties (if favorable ruling) going back 90 days to offset flooding as foreign producers' attempt to beat the trade case deadline. (Imports of foreign steel increased 23% in month of Jan. 2014)
- Progress on transforming USS business model by completing the purchase of the Sparrows Point Caster with engineering at GCW -- where the footprint is "pretty nice" -- is well under way. Upgrading later this year. "This will enhance our commercial opportunities for substrate for the energy sector and enlarge our capabilities" CEO Mario Longhi stated.
- USS Fairfield will replace their one blast furnace with an Electric Arc Furnace (EAF). Will reduce facility capacity from 2.1 million tons per yr. to 1.1 but increased flexibility, reduced materials and transportation costs. Reduced flat rolled production at Fairfield "can be efficiently picked up at any one of USS other facilities. Too far out to determine where orders would go." Fairfield was chosen for EAF because of longest blast furnace campaign.
- High strength steel for auto market: "This is not new. We have been involved in these discussions with customers for some time, addressing their concerns and accelerating new technologies. ProTec continuous annealing in Ohio offers solutions which began operating last year.
- Permits granted to expand Mintac Iron Ore boundaries by 400 acres generating value from one of our competitive strengths.

By Doug May

next generation of activists and leaders to ensure a sustainable future for the labor movement.

One of the most important things we can do to make our USW organization more relevant is to be more inclusive with those young members.

During the United Steelworkers Press Association Conference last October, Fred Redmond, USW Vice-President Civil and Human Affairs described to the delegates what the Next Generation Program- launched in 2012 during the USW 70th Anniversary Conference – can do for them and their future.

Redmond said, “How can we expect our younger members to understand what our organization is really about if we don’t invite them into the processes? What is our movement going to look like if you don’t provide them with education and historical information to look back at where we came from so they are better equipped for the future?”

The second goal of this movement, he said “Is to encourage young members to become a part of our communities through social and local economic justice. Organized labor doesn’t have the numbers to affect public policy alone. We need more allies who want a better world for their children.”

Now more than ever, as well-funded corporate and political attacks threaten the very future of organized labor, the USW needs more of its members to become active and engaged politically, working towards strategically building workers strength at home and around the world. We are in the fight of our lives to protect the opportunity for the next generation to have and keep good family sustaining union jobs.

USW District 7 Next Generation Coordinator, Ephrin Jenkins, of USW Local 1014, U.S. Steel, Gary Works said, “The Next Generation is about creating a sustainable future for Steelworkers. We’re all leaders and as young Steelworkers we have to understand our purpose within this movement. Understanding our purpose doesn’t mean arrogance and amnesia, forgetting the fighters that have paved the way for us. It means we have to respect them in order for our path to be guided. We are the Next Generation. We are leaders of the Next Generation. We are our own history. We have to understand that.”

Redmond concluded, “We need the USW Next Generation engaged so they are better prepared for when the time comes to pass the baton and continue the good work of the USW leaders that came before us. Let’s guide them along the way.”

Coordinator: Ephrin Jenkins
nirhpe77@yahoo.com
219-286-0106

NEXT GENERATION COORDINATOR CONTACTS FOR USW DISTRICT 7 ILLINOIS AND INDIANA

Follow this movement, using all the social media tools available. Go to USW.org - Action Center tab and drop down to Next Generation. Follow them on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and more. The USW New Media Department is eager to train those younger members of Local 1899 who would like to help direct our future or to just get involved.



By Rhonda Krekovich
Women of Steel

Coordinator: Stephen Lech
slech@usw7-669.com
270-331-7484 (Metropolis, Ill.)

A big thank you to all of the generous employees at GCW that contributed in making the Annual Toy and Coat Drive, sponsored by United Steelworkers Local 1899, 68, and 50 and the GCW D.R.E.A.M. Network, a huge success. In addition to the toys and coats collected at the plant, over \$6,000 was raised and spent at Kmart in Granite City to buy additional toys and other much needed items for less fortunate families in the community. GCW delivered holiday hams, bicycles, toys, coats, scarves, hats and gloves to very grateful agencies, the Good Samaritan House and Children’s Home & Aid Society in Granite City. Both agencies expressed their heartfelt appreciation with the GCW employees’ generosity. Some coats were also donated to the Salvation Army in Granite City. Thank you again for helping make the Toy and Coat Drive such a big success!

Continued from page 1: Stan Span

Former Illinois Congressman, Jerry Costello-D Illinois 12th District which encompasses the bridge site and GCW was very instrumental in the funding for this beautiful structure. He said at the ribbon cutting ceremony, “This is what we can accomplish when we set aside our differences.”

Illinois Governor Pat Quinn said, “We are grateful to those who built this graceful structure that was made with American Steel.”

Although Missouri’s Republican officials agreed it would provide much needed relief for one of only three places in the U.S. where four Interstate highways intersect – inconveniently merging at a bridge no less – added to the fact that it would create hundreds of family supporting jobs - including making steel - they stonewalled the project implementation for years in large part; they insisted that it become a toll bridge. Hurdles were finally overcome and Illinois’ Representatives worked through the differences, including the bridge being toll free.

In order to produce more success stories and job creation for our country, the House and Senate negotiators are currently working out their differences in two water infrastructure investment bills. One bill has Buy American language. The other doesn’t. Urge them to KEEP BUY AMERICAN provisions in the Water Resources Development Act.

Another job creator being supported by the USW is using innovative financing approaches, such as self-sustaining National Infrastructure Bank. This plan will spark the public and private capital that is needed to advance repairs for our roads, bridges, outdated electrical grid and other vital systems.

We urge you to support legislation that spurs investment in our infrastructure, including domestic-sourcing policies and the National Infrastructure Development Bank Act (H.R. 2553).

Check www.local1899.org for your elected officials contact information.

“USW District 7 Next Generation Coordinator Ephrin Jenkins, Local 1014 U.S. Steel Gary Works said, “As young Steelworkers we have to understand our purpose within this movement. Understanding our purpose doesn’t mean arrogance and amnesia, forgetting the fighters that have paved the way for us. It means we have to respect them in order for our path to be guided. We are the Next Generation.”



E.J. Jenkins - USW District 7
Next Generation Coordinator.

GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORTS



I HAVE GUN WILL TRAVEL: With the start of 2014 come some changes to the laws in Illinois that could have a great deal of impact on the employees at Granite Works. Perhaps the

one we have had the most questions about is the Firearm Conceal Carry Act and how it will apply at the plant.

The Union leadership has been trying to get answers to that question for some time. While, we have yet to have a formal meeting on the subject, or received any written guidelines, the Company has given us some indication as to how the law will apply. It is our understanding that because the conceal and carry laws are implemented on a state by state basis, and may vary from one state to another, that US Steel Corporate issues plant specific guidelines based on each state's laws.

As of now, it is unclear as to whether or not the Human Resource Department has received the guidelines for Granite Works yet. The most important thing to keep in mind is these changes will only apply to individuals who have completed the legal requirements and been issued a valid permit. There are no expectations of any written changes to the plant work rules pertaining to firearms on Company property. That said, the Company has indicated that they fully intend to adhere to the law. We are not going to attempt to interpret the law in this article, or act as experts on its implementation.

Everyone applying for a permit must attend classes that we assume will better answer those types of questions. Our understanding is that the law provides that an employer can not prohibit an employee from bringing and storing a firearm on a parking lot. Once again, we must caution that the particulars as to what types of weapons and how they are to be stored should be covered by the training classes and we are making no assumptions on the subject.

As to the ability to bring a concealed weapon into the plant, the law does provide that employers can prohibit firearms inside their businesses. You may have noticed new placards and stickers at entrances around the plant indicating that firearms are not allowed.

DOCTOR'S ORDERS: Another change that went into effect beginning January 1 is the creation of a pilot program dealing with the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis.

This one is not as clear cut as the Conceal & Carry law. At this time state agencies are still working to compile the application process, and some of the guidelines governing the implementation of legalized medical marijuana. Early indications from the Company are that this issue is likely to be a minefield to maneuver through. The Act indicates that there is a rigorous process to becoming a legal user, including a background check and a licensing process. The Company has indicated that there may be judgmental interpretations of "under the influence" that the Union will likely not see eye to eye on.

We have requested meetings with the Company to discuss the subject which as of yet have not taken place. For now we would suggest that before anyone begins any treatment, you contact the Union and let us get more detailed information on a case by case basis. Also rest assured that we will continue to pursue more detailed general information as to how the Company intends to adhere to the requirements of the law.

OPEN UP: Our members may have experienced an increase in bag searches while coming and going at the gates. While the Company has not admitted to the reason for the increase we have a suspicion as to the cause. There was suspension of employees bringing prohibited contraband into the plant.

While unfortunate, this does lend itself to another opportunity to revisit the Company's position on their right to search on their property. As we have stated in prior articles, the Company

has the right to protect their property, assets and employees. To that end it has been accepted that they can search bags as they enter and leave the plant. Guards have been instructed not to put their hands into bags but can look and ask for objects to be moved around for examination.

There has also been a great deal of questions about the searching of lockers. While we would hope that there is a justifiable reason for a search of a locker, there is no prohibition against such action. These lockers are not employees' personal property, but rather Company property provided for the convenience of the work force.

We have noted in a prior issue of this publication that the same is true for your personal vehicle on the Company parking lot. While the car is your property, signs at the entrances to the lots state that parking on the lot grants permission to search.

If for some reason the Company would want to search your locker or cars, we suggest you try to cooperate as best you can and ask for Union representation. If the Company wants to conduct an interview, then you have the right to Union representation before talking to them. Use It!!

NEXT YEAR: As several of our members are retiring this year and replacement bids are being posted it has become evident that there is not a clear understanding of transfer rights between the units and departments.

As we have reported before there were changes to the Lines of Progression in several departments during 2012 bargaining. These changes split up the prior large Box 1 and created separate entry levels for most of the units. By doing this it made it easier for folks to move from one unit in their department to another and also afforded people 30 day reclaim rights when doing so. This was achieved because by separating the units it was now classified as a transfer rather than a promotion (move up) when switching to a new unit.

As with any improvement, it usually comes at a price. Along with the right to 30 day reclaim there is a stipulation in the contractual language covering transfers that if an employee accepts transfer and remains on the new job past the 30 days that he/she cannot transfer again for one year. So folks who transferred last year when retiree bids were posted were denied bids early this year because a year had not elapsed since their last transfer.

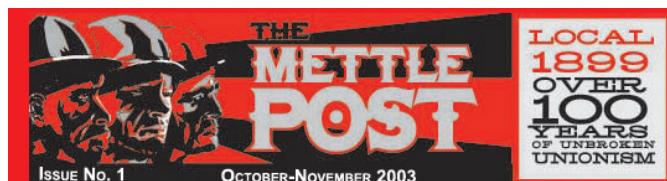
While these rules were discussed during explanation meetings in 2012, we regret that everyone did not have a clear understanding of the transfer requirements. As we see more retirements and with the expectation of possible new hires coming in the plant, there is an expectation of more transfer opportunities in the near future. We just wanted to insure that our members understood all the requirements as they make decisions on moving from one unit or department to another.

BROKEN RECORD: In most every newsletter report we make we give updates on the arbitration docket and where we are on negotiations on incentive plans, and it is generally the same report. Nothing new!

While we understand that these issues carry a great deal of importance to the individuals and groups they directly affect, believe us when we tell you that we equally share in your frustration in the lack of progress on these issues.

On the arbitration front we have had a great deal of success in scheduling dates for arb, but the rules of how cases are prioritized makes it extremely difficult to get "issue" grievances (those not dealing with discharge or contracting out) before the board. We are having even less success in getting the Company to live up to the commitment they made in 2012 bargaining to sit down and discuss the issues with many of the existing incentive plans.

To date we are still dealing with the first one and rarely meeting on that. The problem is we have no leverage to force movement except the threat of arbitration, which is very unlikely given present rules. We have made it clear that if there are no improvements before bargaining in 2015, that we intend to seek resolution at the negotiation table and not close local issues until we achieve resolution.



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By Doug May

OF COMMUNICATING

As we all know, and the older we get, the more apparent it becomes: A decade can pass in the blink of an eye. Mentioning the ten year anniversary of Local 1899's Mettle Post brings to mind the awkward yearning most of us have with wanting milestones acknowledged. We want the hearty slap on the back, but at the same time, we're slightly embarrassed by the fuss. I mean, we're Steelworkers, after all.

I'm going to beg your indulgence with this though because it's not just self-serving recognition that I am discussing here. Without the support and interest from Local 1899 members, leadership, and contributors, I wouldn't be able to create an informative and respectfully appealing publication. In the true spirit of a democratic union organization, these components are all necessary to keep this effort moving forward.

In the grand scheme of things, 10 years of producing a newsletter may not seem like a big deal compared to the longevity of the 150-year old St. Louis Post Dispatch, or the venerable New York Times. But in the world of local union newsletters, this sustained effort at 1899 is an achievement we can all be proud of.

A little reflection for those who have hired into GCW since the inception or for those whose spouse discards your mailed issue before you get a chance to read: When I was first approached with the idea to launch a newsletter for our members in 2003, after the merging of three Granite City Steel locals -- the year U.S. Steel became the employer for most 1899 members -- I had no layout and design knowledge. I did, however, possess deep concerns for organized labor, and the struggle of middle-class workers. I would write editorials to local newspapers trying to bring attention to the plight of blue-collar America. But I had no publication experience; just a lot of apprehension about accepting a role that I felt I was not qualified to fulfill.

Trying to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, I attempted forcing a newsletter creation out of a 'MS Word' program. As my donated time and personal resources would allow, I gradually improved upon my desktop publication skills by attending our USW/USS ICD. The tuition assistance the negotiated benefit provided allowed me to attend the University of Missouri-St. Louis where I learned the basics of layout and design. More importantly, my ICD student discount status allowed me to qualify for a drastically reduced retail price, and I was able to purchase what is considered to be the industry standard software for graphic and layout design, Adobe Photoshop Suite, at an affordable price that wouldn't have my wife stringing me from the rafters.

After completing three levels of Photoshop at ICD, and attending four United Steelworkers Press Association training conferences, along with vigilant monitoring of all the USW and USPA offers online, I am much more comfortable producing our quarterly newsletter while administering our 1899 website and social media.

Thanks to U.S. Steel's ongoing efforts, combined with the divisive political climate in our country that takes every opportunity to beat up on organized labor, and all the other forces that contribute to the downward spiral of the middle class, we always have plenty of fodder. The content may not always reveal the information that you would like, but we can't air all of our dirty, in-plant laundry for the entire world to read.

Applying my best effort to include union-related topics or members' human interest stories combined with nudging our leadership to write about their specific member-related expertise, I always wish I would have done something better. But working full-time in the BOF and producing this newsletter from home makes it difficult to interact with members throughout the plant. So please spread the word that we strive to be more inclusive.

As anniversaries are meant to make us take a moment to ponder what has been and what will come, I hope when the day arrives to pass the pen (or the keyboard) to one of our younger members, the new Mettle Post editor will have the same passion and belief that through solidarity and activism we can make a difference in the lives of not only ourselves, but generations to come.



Communications is the Key

2013 Training Conference



The United Steelworkers Press Association presented Local 1899 awards in four out of the eight total categories for excellence in fields of work since the last conference in 2010. The following were presented to Local 1899 Editor and Communicator Doug May by USW President Leo W. Gerard and V.P. Fred Redmond during the Awards Banquet on the last day of our Conference. Best Editorial/Column; Best Feature Story; Best Use of Social Media; Best Original Photo.

Best Photo

Best Feature Story

Best Use of Social Media

FLUFFING DOGS AND HAULING DUNG

THIS COULD BE AMERICANS' FUTURE
SUPPORT NEEDED FOR USW AND AAM POLICIES
FOR REAL JOBS

Best Editorial or Column

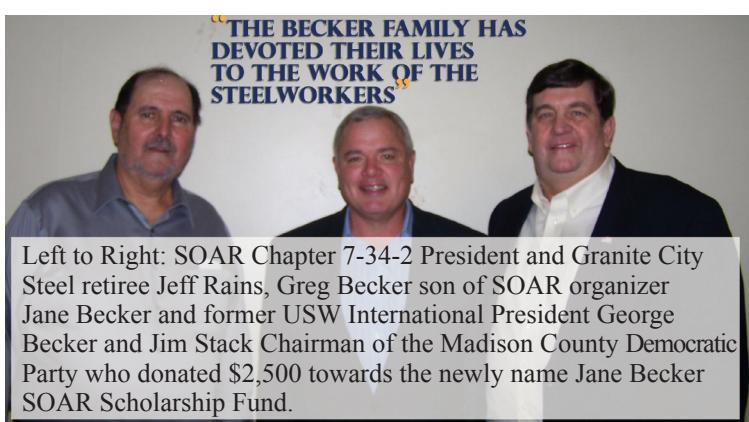
Media and communications are critically important elements in today's complex world, in our homes, at work and in the political arena where key struggles for workers' rights and dignity takes place. The Triennial 2013 United Steelworkers (USPA) 24th Training Conference was held Sept. 29 - Oct. 2, 2013 in Pittsburgh, Pa. The educational event included three days of workshops designed to better educate the delegates who were in attendance with improved methods for messaging and informing our members about critical issues within our workplace and those public policy issues that affect working people across America.

The USPA through the assistance of the USW International New Media Department is embracing all the modern tools available to better communicate with our members and the community in addition to the traditional newsletter method.

"The way we communicate has evolved over the years, but the goals of USPA and our union have not," said USW President Leo W. Gerard.

"We've got to incorporate every possible tool to better communicate with our members - Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, Snapchat, just to name a few," said Van Tenpenny, President of the USPA.

Left to Right: SOAR Chapter 7-34-2 President and Granite City Steel retiree Jeff Rains, Greg Becker son of SOAR organizer Jane Becker and former USW International President George Becker and Jim Stack Chairman of the Madison County Democratic Party who donated \$2,500 towards the newly name Jane Becker SOAR Scholarship Fund.



During the SOAR Chapter meetings, held on the second Monday of every month at 12:00 at the Venice Social Club, Highway 162 in Pontoon Beach, there seems to be an absence of Zone 16 Steelmaking retirees, the vast majority formerly hot strip, cold strip and yard maint. Please spread the word that all USW retirees from GCW are more than welcome. This is a very inclusive bunch and the large attendance indicates those who go enjoy the experience.



Congratulations to the following Local 1899 members who have retired since the last issue of the MP October/Fall 2013.

JON GRAMS	1978-02-05	HOT STRIP
SCHREIBER MICHAEL	1972-11-12	COLD STRIP
SWANSON WILLIAM	1987-08-27	PLANT PROTECTION
ROGERS ARTHUR	1990-03-05	STEELMAKING & CAST
BUTLER LEONARD	1978-09-07	ROLL SHOP
HAWLEY JOHN MARK	1979-02-25	STEELMAKING & CAST
VITALE ANTHONY	1977-03-02	UTIL, SERVICE & YARD
ELLEDGE GREGORY	1995-08-14 2	COLD STRIP
WICKHAM DOUGLAS	1996-04-01	STEELMAKING & CAST
BAKER JACK	1972-08-2	STEELMAKING & CAST
BOHNENSTIEHL RANDY	1972-09-11	STD Gauge
WELLEN RICHARD	1971-02-07	PLANT PROTECTION
KERTZ KENNETH	1996-12-09	UTIL, SERVICE & YARD
BRAME, JR. CLIFTON	1971-02-08	STEELMAKING & CAST

United Steelworkers Local 1899
Tri-Cities Labor Temple
2014-A State Street
Granite City, IL. 62040



USW Local 1899 OFFICERS

President	Dan Simmons
Vice-President	Phil Chism
Recording Secretary	Randy Virgin
Treasurer	Rhonda Krekovich
Financial Secretary	Walt Winters
Grievance Chairman	Tom Ryan

GRIEVERS

Zone 67	Lenny Chambers	TRUSTEES	Doug May
Zone 30	Don Cathey		Penny Chambers
Zone 16	Phil Chism		Terry Biggs

GUARDS

Kitty Loepker	GUIDE	Don Cathey
Danny Drennan		

CONTRACT COORDINATOR

Randy Virgin
Mettle Post Editor
Doug May

Office: 618-452-1899 **Fax:** 618-877-0325
Grievance Hall 452-3400
Website: www.local1899.org
Facebook: Local 1899



UNION MEETING SCHEDULE FOR ALL USW Local 1899



Local 1899 Regular Meetings:

First Thursday of every month at 5:30
Third Thursday of every month at 4:30

Tube City:

Second Wednesday of every month at 3:45
Date and time for Tube City unit may change due to scheduling of work.
Please watch for postings.

Credit Union:

3/12/14 5/14/14 7/9/14 9/10/14 11/12/14

Stein Unit:

First Thursday of every month at 1:30 and 3:15

Plant Protection and O&T:

Same as regular 1899 meetings.

