

November-December 2023

Volume 1



Forged Together

USW 2958 Newsletter



Contributors:

Joe Fields, Paul Reehling, Zach Keller, & Andrew Betzner

LABOR NEWS: INTRODUCING "FORGED TOGETHER": YOUR GATEWAY TO INVOLVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

By Zach Keller

We are excited to launch the first edition of "Forged Together," our new way to stay informed and engaged with our local union.

In today's rapidly changing world, the need for unity and collective action has never been more crucial. This newsletter aims to serve as a vital link between you, our dedicated members, and the heart of our union's activities. Through this platform, we aim to keep you informed about the latest developments, share labor news important to us, highlight our members and our history, and provide valuable resources to enhance your involvement in our union.

Our union is only as strong as its members, and your engagement is the lifeblood of our collective strength. Together, we will work towards better working conditions, fair wages, and a brighter future for all. Thank you for your support, and we can't wait to embark on this journey of empowerment and solidarity with you. Stay connected, stay informed, and let's make a difference together!

A Message from the President

By Dave Tocco

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the members who helped during the contract, attended rallies, helped with the teams, voting, etc. Special thanks go out to the members that showed up to vote. The local has committees that are trying to build solidarity amongst us. Their first venture is going to be an adult Christmas party where there will be plenty of food and beverages for everyone along with entertainment for those who wish to dance. The party will be at the VFW on December 2, 2023, tentative time is 7pm to 11pm. The Children's Christmas party will be held on December 9, 2023, from 2pm to 4pm Santa will be

present so bring your cameras. There will also be food and beverages. The union is also presently having a gun raffle to raise money \$10 a chance and only 200 chances will be sold. The union is being told that the A&K project will start the latter part of November. Rex and I have started the four hour pre-arbitration meetings again. The next meeting will be November 16, 2023. Caitlyn Martinez will be the chairperson for the adult Christmas party. Co-chairs are Danny Acord, Faith Truax, Lisa Pulsipher and Katt McNeil. Have a safe Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas to all.

KNOW YOUR WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

IF THIS DISCUSSION COULD IN ANY WAY LEAD TO MY BEING DISCIPLINED OR TERMINATED, OR AFFECT MY PERSONAL WORKING CONDITIONS, I REQUEST THAT MY STEWARD OR UNION OFFICER BE PRESENT AT THE MEETING. WITHOUT REPRESENTATION, I CHOOSE NOT TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS.



GET YOUR REPS IN

By Andrew Betzner

While you may not have heard of the term "Weingarten Rights," I bet you've heard the phrase, "Get my rep!". Think of them as the Miranda Rights of the labor realm. If disciplinary action is on the table then you have the right to have union representation with you. It's that simple, right? Let's take a deeper dive.

Get Your Reps In

Continued

First, let's establish what situations qualify for Weingarten Rights. If your employer is asking questions regarding an investigation that has the potential for discipline or if you have to defend, explain, or admit misconduct then you are entitled to Weingarten Rights. What if your employer claims that they aren't threatening discipline or assigning blame?

If a reasonable employee would believe it could lead to discipline, you have rights. Is management using a confrontational tone? Have you received notices or warnings prior to the meeting? Have other employees been disciplined for similar conduct? Better get your union representative.

Invoking one's Weingarten Rights is simple: All you have to do is state, "I want my rep!". Make it clear, if the conversation could lead to discipline that you choose not to discuss it further until your representation is present. After that, the employer has three options: grant your request and wait until representation is available, deny the request and end the interview, or deny the request and ask if you would like to continue without a rep. Further questioning from management could constitute an unfair labor practice violation.

When your representative arrives management must explain the nature of discussion, and give you both time to conference privately. During questioning your representative should take notes and ask the employer to clarify questions. They can prohibit questions that are intimidating or offensive. Your rep can help you stay on track and not volunteer any unnecessary information. A representative serves not only as an advisor, but as a witness.

When faced with a conversation that could put your job at risk, your union membership ensures you never have to go it alone. Get to know your rights and how to use them. Stop by the union hall on 420 N. Main St. to get a Weingarten Rights card. Do you have more questions on Weingarten Rights or ideas for future labor rights discussions? Reach out to us at USW2958news@gmail.com



Safety Spotlight

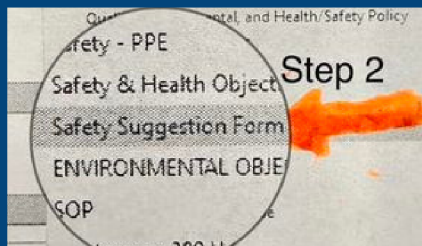
SAFETY SUGGESTION PORTAL

By Zach Keller

We're not sure how many people are aware, but there is a new tool on the intranet to report and suggest safety issues and measures. Go to the Intranet tab in Shopfloor and scroll down to Safety Suggestion Form and then fill out the form and submit. It goes directly to the safety department. Some instructions are included if needed. This is probably the best way to get something done quickly as the notification goes to everyone (the whole safety department, all department heads and superintendents, etc.) Also, the October Safety Audit Results are posted at the Facebook group page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/usw2958safetyhealthgroup> Please consider joining if you're on Facebook and not already a member to stay updated on the latest in safety news.

Safety Suggestion Portal

Continued



USW 2958 Safety & Health Representatives
Doug Kline, Chairperson
Scott Pulsipher - 1st Shift Alternate
Phil Kuntzman - 2nd Shift
Kevin Smith - 2nd Shift Alternate
Zach Keller - 3rd Shift

A screenshot of a 'Safety Suggestion Form'. The form has several sections: 'Name:', '(Optional) Date:', '(MM/DD/YYYY)', 'Please describe your suggestion to improve safety conditions.', 'Any additional or new PPE necessary?' with 'Yes' and 'No' checkboxes, 'Please list them.* (If "Yes" was selected)', 'Requested PPE:', 'Related Hazard:', 'Supervisor/Manager:', 'Please describe the potential hazard or unsafe condition in detail.', a 'RM-1-FM' stamp, a speaker icon, 'New code', 'Please type the code above', and a 'Submit' button.

LOCAL UNION BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Cardwell Tax Service (David Hunt)

Tax preparation services

Call Heather Hunt at 766-864-0684 with any questions or to schedule an appointment

343 S 00 EW, Kokomo, IN 46902

We are a small family owned business that has been in operation for 50 years. We prepare tax returns for individuals, businesses, farms and rentals! UAW and USW member owned.

Terry Roe

Epoxy painted insulated cups and hardhats



574 -229-3998

nrsroe1@outlook.com

Colby Marner

Body Glow on Facebook & text 317-855-0595 to book an appointment.

Esthetician: I do facials, waxing, lashes and massage.

Brandi Tackett

S&B Creations LLC

Website: www.sbcreations4you@gmail.com

Facebook group: S&B Creations LLC

Cell: 765-480-9974 (call or text)

What we do: Custom apparel, graphic design, tumblers, marketing material, laser engraving, keychains, decals, and more.

Danny Shelton

Dumpster rental

www.Russiavillarentals.com

765-867-8104

**PLEASE SUPPORT
OUR USW
BROTHERS & SISTERS**

Cold Strips - Warm Hearts

By Paul Reehling



R-35 Cold Strip Mill Food Drive for Darrough Chapel Head Start Program

Purpose

To provide nutrition assistance to Preschool aged children enrolled in Kokomo School Corporation's Head Start Program. Currently their food pantry is critically low. Over 90% of their students are below the poverty line. Some of these students may be getting a majority of their food through the school. Donations would ensure no child goes hungry during the Thanksgiving break.

What is needed

Any non-perishable food items or foods that don't expire quickly. Pastas, ramen, spaghetti sauces, cereals, peanut butter and other such items that don't require refrigeration.

How to help

A donation box will be provided outside of the break room in R-35. Donations will be collected from now until Nov 20th to ensure the items can make it out before the start of Thanksgiving break. Reach out to us at USW2958news@gmail.com with questions.



Rapid Response is the Steelworkers' nonpartisan grassroots education, communication, and action program that provides the necessary structure to inform every USW member about pending legislation concerning labor and work-related issues. Rapid Response provides opportunity for all USW members to have a strong voice and an active part in the government decisions and legislative actions that affect them, their families, their contracts, and their communities.

Jim Elliott is the Local 2958 Rapid Response Coordinator

RAPID RESPONSE ACTION CALL: A SAFE HEALTHCARE STAFFING MANDATE IS NEEDED NOW!

Share how understaffing has made an impact on you, your family, and your job. Your comments will be used to ensure that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) establishes a safe staffing standard. Visit <https://steelworkers.wufoo.com/forms/share-your-experience-with-nursing-home-staffing>

In July, we sounded the alarm with a Safe Staffing Now [InfoAlert](#). It's now time to take action. Safe staffing is a major concern that USW and healthcare workers across our country face. Chronic understaffing leads to workplace violence, undue risk of injury or illness, chronic fatigue, and mental health strain. These are all issues that impact both the health and safety for workers and the patients they care for.

Sarah Hardnett, of USW Local 9201-01 in Alabama, is very familiar with the reality of having unsafe staffing ratios.

"Working understaffed has negatively impacted myself and other employees physically, mentally, and emotionally," says Hardnett, a CNA at Magnolia Ridge, a long term care facility in Gardendale, AL.

"We are expected to provide an outstanding quality of service, despite being understaffed. This has led the employees to be overwhelmed. They're missing much-needed breaks and not providing the best possible service that we all desire and know that the residents deserve," she says. Sarah and her colleagues also struggle with the thought of letting down her patients and family.

"I feel all residents we serve are entitled to the best care possible," she says. Hardnett says that the staffing regulations being recommended by the Biden administration for nursing homes are not only a health and safety issue for workers, but a moral issue for patients. "A law change is much needed and will not only ensure that the residents receive the quality of care their families were promised, but it will also assist with creating a more productive work environment for all employees," she says. "It's the right thing to do."

LOCAL 2958 CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

November 13

AGC Meetings
7:30am; 1:00pm, & 3:15pm

November 22

Regular Membership
Meetings

7:30am
1:00pm
3:30pm

November 23 & 24

Union Hall Closed
for Thanksgiving Holiday

December 2

The adult Christmas Party is scheduled for Saturday, 12/2/23 at the VFW 920 N Washington St Kokomo. Please contact the hall if you are attending and how many guests will be in attendance. More information will be forth coming as it becomes available.

December 9

The Childrens Christmas Party is scheduled for Saturday, 12/9/23 at USW Union Hall 420 N Main St Kokomo. The times are 2pm to 4pm. There will be refreshments and presents for the kids till gone. Santa will be here also. If you want to help out, please let me know.

December 11

AGC Meetings
7:30am; 1:00pm; & 3:15pm

December 21

Regular Membership
Meetings

7:30am
1:00pm
3:30pm

**December
25-29**

Union Hall Closed for
Christmas Holiday

YOUR LOCAL OFFICERS & OFFICIALS

PRESIDENT - DAVID TOCCO
VICE-PRESIDENT - STEVE LEMING
FINANCIAL SECRETARY - ROBERT CRULL
TREASURER - JOE FIELDS
RECORDING SECRETARY - JOHN BECK
GUIDE - TROY JOHNS
OUTSIDE GUARD - MARION LABIG
INSIDE GUARD - WILLIE JACKSON
TRUSTEE - DESMON WILLIAMS
TRUSTEE - ZACH KELLER
TRUSTEE - JIM ELLIOTT

HUMAN RIGHTS CHAIR - WILLIE JACKSON, FIRST SHIFT
HUMAN RIGHTS ASSISTANT - ROMAN MARTIN, FIRST SHIFT
HUMAN RIGHTS ASSISTANT - HENRY YOUNG, SECOND SHIFT
RAPID RESPONSE COORDINATOR, JIM ELLIOTT, FIRST SHIFT
SAFETY & HEALTH CHAIR - DOUG KLINE, FIRST SHIFT
SAFETY & HEALTH (ALT) - SCOTT PULSIPHER, FIRST SHIFT
SAFETY & HEALTH - PHILLIP KUNTZMAN, SECOND SHIFT
SAFETY & HEALTH (ALT) - KEVIN SMITH, SECOND SHIFT
SAFETY & HEALTH - ZACH KELLER, THIRD SHIFT
CONTRACTING OUT CHAIR - SCOTT PUSLIPHER, FIRST SHIFT
CONTRACTING OUT ASST. - KEVIN SMITH, SECOND SHIFT
SKILLED TRADES CHAIR - JOHN BECK, FIRST SHIFT
SKILLED TRADES COMMITTEE - BILL PRATT, FIRST SHIFT

YOUR LOCAL OFFICERS & OFFICIALS

Continued

EAP REPRESENTATIVE - LOWELL PARSON, FIRST SHIFT
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - KELLY SILVERS, FIRST SHIFT
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - BYRON ELLISON, THIRD SHIFT
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - DANNY SHELTON, THIRD SHIFT
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - DAVID TOCCO, FIRST SHIFT
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - DESMON WILLIAMS, THIRD SHIFT
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - JIM ELLIOTT, FIRST SHIFT
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - ERIC HAINLEN, THIRD SHIFT
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - STEVE LEMING, FIRST SHIFT
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - ERIC GIBSON, SECOND SHIFT
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - LISA BRYANYT, SECOND SHIFT
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - BRAYDEN MOTE, THIRD SHIFT

AGC- Brandon Thomas WG 1 - Department 170; first shift
ASSISTANT- Jeremy Ingold WG 1 - Department 170; third shift
ASSISTANT -Johnnie Roberts WG 1 - Department 170; first shift

AGC- Eric Gibson WG 2 - Department 190; second shift

AGC- Kasey Mitchell WG 3 - Department 145; first shift

AGC- Michael Wright, WG 4 - Department 143; first shift
ASSISTANT- Craig Musgrave WG 4 - Department 143

AGC- Scott Pulsipher WG 5A - Department 154; first shift
ASSISTANT- Zach Keller WG 5A - Department 154; third shift

AGC - Danny Acord WG 5B - Department 156; first shift
ALT- Trey Shane WG 5B - Department 168; first shift
ASSISTANT- Braedon Wyrick WG 5B - Department 168; 2nd shift
ASSISTANT -Bo Baker WG 5B - Department 168; third shift

AGC- Dennis Tucker WG 6 - Department 172; second shift
ALT- Marion 'Bud' Labig WG 6 - Department 172; first shift
ASSISTANT- Matt Mince WG 6 - Department 172; first shift

AGC- Pat Young WG 9, 10 - Department 447; first shift
ASSISTANT- Rob Ooley WG 9, 10 - Department 447; third shift.

AGC- Randy McGuire, WG 8 - Department 427; first shift
ASSISTANT- Craig Bambrough WG 8 - Department 427; third shift
ASSISTANT -Doug Herr WG 8 - Department 427; first shift

AGC- Bryan Ashburn WG 11 - Department 297; first shift
ASST- Adam Henderson WG 11 - 297; first shift

AGC- Kacey Gibson WG 13 - Department 317; first shift



You're Not My Boss!

By Andrew Betzner

Have you ever wanted to call your boss a jackass without any repercussions? Just become a union committeeperson of course! Okay, maybe not the best reason to take on that role. When dealing with management, labor law grants your committeeperson special rights to help defend you. These rights are known as The Equality Principle.

The core concept of the Equality Principle is this: When a committeeperson is acting in official union business, they are considered equal with management. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) recognizes that the role is likely to involve confrontations with management. In pursuit of defending their membership, committeepersons may be involved in heated debate, questioning management's authority, and making certain demands of them. The Equality Principle empowers your representative to vigorously defend you without fear of reprisal. Picture this: You invoked your Weingarten Rights for a disciplinary meeting and now your rep is getting loud calling your boss a liar. You're concerned their behavior could result in them receiving disciplinary action of their own. While best practice normally calls for calm collected discussion, sometimes these types of behaviors are needed and are protected under the Equality Principle. The NLRB has ruled some profanity and even defiance are protected under this clause (Tillford Contractors, 317 NLRB 68).

Raising their voice, putting supervision's credibility into question, and threatening legal action are all protected actions of a committee person when working in an official capacity.

Now we'll discuss when this rule goes into effect. The Equality Principle only applies when a representative is arguing a contract matter, presenting a grievance, investigating a complaint, or discussing other such decisions affecting a bargaining unit. It does not permit them to go off half-cocked in relation to his or her individual matters (criticism of job performance, work assignment ect). The Equality Principle also does not provide protection for threats of violence, racial slurs, false testimony, or extreme profanity. Shouting, while typically protected, cannot be so disruptive that it interferes with operations.

Let's tie this all together on how it affects those who aren't a union representative. Earlier in the newsletter we discussed your right to having representation present when discussing discipline (Weingarten Rights). The Equality Principle is the driving force behind their ability to provide an effective defense. With these legal rights your boss is not their boss. Without these protections your representative would be nothing more than a paper tiger, and there would be no recourse for you to defend yourself without retribution.



UNITED STEELWORKERS
USW
UNITY AND STRENGTH FOR WORKERS

District 7



Local 2958 Member Highlight

Vic Atwell ~ Member Since 1980

Tell us a bit about yourself. What are your passions and interests outside of your job?

"Motorcycles and shooting sports. I was involved with my daughter when she was competing [in shooting sports] and traveling for several years in high school, and one year collegiate. Going to Ohio a lot, several clubs throughout the state, the state tournaments were down by Fishers, Warsaw, southern Indiana."

What's your favorite thing about your local community, and how do you like to contribute or give back to it?

"Two things that stand out. One would be the veterans' support in the community per capita. We have one of the largest in the state as far as people in the community that are involved, have a lot of member support for Brad that came home [his son Brad was killed in action in Afghanistan], the second thing is that the labor movement in Howard county is a strong workforce in Howard county and that's always a plus."

If your life were a movie, which actor would play you, and what would the title be?

"The guy from 'American Sniper', Bradley Cooper, and I'll let others decide the title."

Is there a particular accomplishment or achievement that you're especially proud of?

"I served on the executive board, co-chair of the safety & health committee for almost 8 years and, I would like to see more people up there more typically more people want to step up, but I understand both sides of it."

What advice would you give to new members who are just starting their journey with the union?

"My advice to the new members is this be patient and try to understand that for the most part, people involved at the local level are volunteer for the most part run by volunteers and I can tell you that it is a job. I think that if people take care of their job, it'll take care of them"



Union History

By Paul Reehling

Unions in The USA

"Today's diverse, inclusive labor movement advances the hopes and aspirations of all working people to build a stronger, more equitable America. When workers unite in a union we turn low-paying jobs into good jobs that pay family-supporting wages..." AFL-CIO Values statement

Labor Unions started in Europe during the Industrial Revolution of the 18th century and became a part of the culture of the United States from the very beginning. Since then they have gone through a vast evolution as our country and workforce has grown

The very first recorded worker strike in America happened in 1768. Journeymen tailors protested a wage reduction. When they refused to work the business owners had no choice but to give in to their demands so as not to lose customers and valuable workers.

Not long after this, a group of Philadelphia shoemakers formed the first union. The Federal Society of Journeymen Cordwainers. Established in 1794. This union was established to help protect wages as well as protect the journeyman's jobs from being taken by workers willing to work for lower wages. Initially this worked and they were able to negotiate a wage increase but in 1799 they went on strike and ended up agreeing to a reduction in pay which they believed to be temporary.

In 1805, after demanding more money, the union once again went on strike. This time they ended up in court. This Trial became known as the Conspiracy Trial. The end result was not good for the working class people. As a result of this trial, all workers' societies and trade unions that were formed to control prices or wages became illegal in America.

Union History

Continued

This held until 1842, when Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw ruled that as long as these societies and unions were formed and used legal means to reach their goals they were to be allowed in the United States.

The history of Labor Unions has been contentious and remains so to this day.

Our predecessors fought for our right to have better wages, safer work conditions, better health care, better retirement, as well as other aspects that make up our jobs and today we continue this fight.

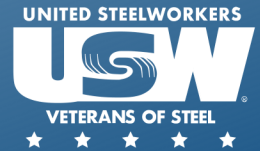
Please watch for future installments of "Forged Together" for a continued look into the history of Unions.

Vets of Steel

If you are a USW member who's also a military veteran and interested in learning more about our Veterans of Steel Program, visit usw.org/VetsOfSteel and fill out the form or text VET to 47486 to join. **With your registration, you'll receive a free "Veteran of Steel" dog tag and hard-hat sticker.**

Text VET to the number 47486

By opting-in, you agree to receive recurring messages from the USW International; message and data rates may apply. To opt out, text STOP. For help, text HELP. Full terms and conditions at usw.org/text. No purchase necessary.



Next Issue:

Union Election Issues & Information *Remember to get your meetings in!*

We are looking for better ways to communicate happenings within our local, but also help build community amongst our members. We hope you find the content of the newsletter worth reading, and we are always looking for feedback. If anyone has general questions, comments, ideas of topics to cover, side hustles you want to promote, questions for officers, useful information, or even to volunteer, e-mail us at: usw2958news@gmail.com