

FORGED TOGETHER



Inside This Edition:

LOCAL USW LOCKOUTS REPORT

HOW ACERINOX TAX SAVINGS CAN WORK FOR US

MENTAL HEALTH MAINTENANCE

UNITED STEELWORKERS



UNITY AND STRENGTH FOR WORKERS

May / June 2026

CONTRACT SURVEY RESULTS

UNION HISTORY: SONS OF VULCAN

GRADUATIONS

Union Hall
CLOSED

MEMORIAL DAY

 REMEMBER AND HONOR

MAY 25

UPCOMING EVENTS


6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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Forged Together Newsletter Feedback

READER SURVEY

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, articles they would like to submit, hobbies they want to highlight, 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

SCAN HERE




Communications Team:
 Zach Keller, Paul Reehling, & Austin Thorpe

Contributors: David Hunt, Kurtis Cox, Eric Gibson, Paul Wines, Andrew Betzner, & Joe Fields



MAY 2
 1:00PM



JUNE 6
 1:00PM

MONTHLY MEETING

MAY 21
 7:30AM
 1:00PM
 3:30PM

MONTHLY MEETING

JUNE 18
 7:30AM
 1:00PM
 3:30PM

DO NOT BUY BP GAS
 STAND WITH 7-1

These stations do not get fuel from BP - BUY FROM THESE:

Meijer ~ Costco ~ Kroger ~ Sam's Club ~ Casey's ~ Shell ~ Mobil ~ Marathon ~ Texaco ~ Chevron ~ Exxon ~ Kwik Trip ~ Love's Travel




UNITED STEELWORKERS
WOS
 WOMEN OF STEEL

MAY 16
 1:00PM

UNITED STEELWORKERS
WOS
 WOMEN OF STEEL

JUNE 20
 1:00PM



MERCEDES LAHR
 WORK GROUP 2 - MEMBER SINCE 2018

↑ **CLOCK NUMBER - 27041**
SHIFT - 1ST

Q

Tell us a bit about yourself. What are your passions and interests outside of your job? What drives you to run for a public office?

Interests outside of my job? People have lives outside of here?! Lol! I'm passionate about helping people. I'm big into community involvement & that just kind of led to civic engagement. I never really planned to run for office, but I watched Robots a lot growing up & Bigweld said, "See a need, fill a need".



Q

What's something people would be surprised to learn about you? One word friends would use to describe you?

I'm not sure what people don't already know about me, but at 33 years old I'm the eldest of 14 siblings, with my youngest sibling being 7 years old. One word to describe me? I put all the words my friends sent me into Google & the synonym it gave me is "Indomitable".

Q

What's a moment or experience here that shaped how you lead or how you think about representing others?

A couple things actually. My first contract here there was a coworker who kept trying to get everyone's attention by talking about "Button Monkeys". Basically saying that we aren't monkeys pushing buttons & deserve to be treated as such. It didn't help make the impact he hoped, but it stuck with me as an out of the box approach. The other big one was watching several women who were obviously burnt out step up to fill voids within our union when they could have easily just let things fall apart. Despite lack of involvement, we still show up for everyone & continue to extend our hands.

Q

What's one thing you think we do really well as a group? What advice would you give someone on how to find pride in what they do?

I had to think pretty hard about what our local is good at as a group, I'm trying not to be too critical because we have made some progress, but I know we are capable of SO MUCH more! I am always blown away by our gate collections & the amount of money we

raise when we pass cards around for people. Our generosity within our own gates is heartwarming. As far as pride in what we do... on the floor, stay safe, help others, & make sure we're getting quality work out as we are in fact "the best in the world at what we do"... In the union though, GET INVOLVED! Show up to as many different meetings & events as you can. Give input when it's asked for. Give input when it's not asked for. This is OUR union, PLEASE be a part of shaping it. I PROMISE it's more fulfilling than it is frustrating.

Q

Center Township Board; what is it, where is it and what kinds of decisions will you be tasked with making if elected?

First off, it's located right around the corner from our hall at 213 E. Jefferson St. Kokomo In 46901. Meetings are open to the public & live streamed! This part of our local government (that encompasses a large part of Kokomo, but not all of it) oversees things like the care for our public parks, older cemeteries, maintaining overgrown areas & those types of things, but the two things I'm most interested in (not that those don't interest me) are our fire departments & our community assistance. Non-profits, food pantries, utilities, etc. assistance means lifting our community in the most basic & meaningful ways possible.

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

I will address new members for sure, but first to our long-term members... Since I started here I've heard A LOT of, "I see these people all day, I don't want to see them outside of here." "I pay my dues, I don't need to be over there." "This is how it's always been, it's never going to change." & honestly, it's always from people who either never show up, or only show up when they want something. You cannot sit idly by on the sidelines & expect change to magically happen, or get mad when things don't turn out the way you would've liked them to. You need to stand up, step in,

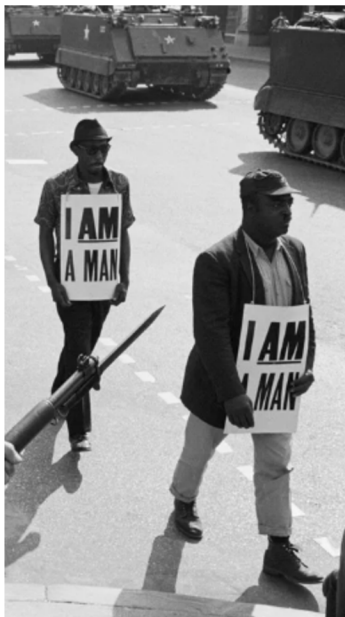
be the change you want to see. Be the example you didn't have or wish you saw... To our new members, WELCOME!!!! I'm not just saying that because it boosts my seniority, I genuinely enjoy meeting new people & I hope you have a hunger for getting involved! Don't let what I just said scare you, & don't let any of the negativity you might hear on the floor turn you away from getting involved. If you are even REMOTELY curious about the union, what we do, how it works, how you can get involved, what events are being planned, where we are in the community, what classes you can take, how we operate on the floor, ANYTHING at all, please do not be afraid to reach out to anyone at the hall. For that matter, reach out to your committee person, someone on the board,

from W.O.S. (Women of Steel), NextGen (which you should check out, btw), a random person at our monthly meetings, or even the person working next to you on the floor who's worked here for awhile & should be able to direct you to someone who knows, & I am always available to lead you to someone who has an answer if I don't have it. I know being involved with the union seems like taking on a second job, but I promise you it is so worth it! I am raising both of my kiddos & caring for my Memaw who has dementia, obviously running for Center Township Board, working here at Haynes, staying active in my family & friend's lives, & still make being involved in NextGen & W.O.S. a priority because being a part of OUR local union is not only fulfilling, it's rewarding in countless ways! Not to mention it will help you feel a little more ready come contract time.



→ COMPILED BY
WILLIE JACKSON &
DAVE TOCCO

WHERE CIVIL RIGHTS & LABOR RIGHTS MEET
- "I AM A MAN" ~ MORE THAN A SIGN



The phrase "I Am a Man" cuts right to the core of what the labor movement has always been about: dignity.

During the Memphis sanitation workers' strike, Black sanitation workers walked off the job after unsafe conditions led to the deaths of two coworkers. They faced low pay, dangerous work, and daily disrespect. Their message to the world was simple and direct. "I AM A MAN."

That statement wasn't just about civil rights. It was about being treated like a human being at work. Safe conditions. Fair wages. Basic respect. The same things workers have fought for in every generation.

Martin Luther King Jr. came to Memphis to stand with those workers. By that point, he had made it clear that civil rights and labor rights were tied together. Economic justice was the next step. While supporting the strike, he was assassinated at the Lorraine Motel on April 4, 1968.

That moment cemented the strike's place in both labor and civil rights history. It showed how powerful the connection is between the fight for equality and the fight for fair work.

"I Am a Man" still holds up today. It reminds us that behind every contract, every grievance, and every negotiation, the issue is the same. Workers want to be treated like they matter. And that's something worth standing together for.



ARTICLE BY
JOE FIELDS

LOCAL UNION VIEWPOINTS:

ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL CONTRACT:

HOW ACERINOX'S TAX SAVINGS CAN POWER OUR NEXT CONTRACT



Looking toward our next Collective Bargaining Agreement, it is vital that we understand the new financial landscape of our company. With the acquisition of Haynes International by Acerinox, the company is positioned to receive massive tax windfalls. These aren't just numbers on a balance sheet—they represent "negotiable meat" on the bone for our membership.

The acquisition, valued at approximately \$970 million, triggers several U.S. tax benefits that Acerinox is already planning to use. Under current laws, the company can claim 100% bonus depreciation on the \$170 million they have committed to investing right here in Kokomo.

When you add up the immediate write-offs for equipment, the 15-year tax deductions for "Goodwill" and patents, and the projected \$71 million in annual synergies, the tax-related cash savings for the company are estimated to exceed \$44 million in the first year alone.

We should believe in a "fair share" philosophy. If Acerinox were to invest just 10% of those estimated first-year tax savings back into the hourly workforce that makes these alloys possible, the impact on our wage scales would be meaningful to our membership.

Allocating just 10% of the potential tax savings the company is going to benefit from could be an immediate \$1.85/hr wages increase, on top of annual wages increases. Why does this matter?

Research shows that when corporate taxes go down, unions have a historic opportunity to capture a portion of those savings through higher wage premiums. Acerinox has already highlighted the "excellence" and "value-added" nature of our work in Kokomo to their shareholders.

When we sit down at the table for our next CBA, we aren't just asking for inflation-protected wages, more secure retirements, or standard wages increases. We are asking for our share of the massive tax benefits generated by this merger, benefits that only exist because of the high-performance alloys we produce every day.

LOCAL 2958

LOCAL UNION VIEWPOINTS:



ARTICLE BY:
ZACH KELLER

HALFWAY THERE: CONTRACT SURVEY RESULTS

Members spoke up about what they want in the next contract, and the message is pretty clear. We received 58 survey responses over about three and a half weeks. The survey included a few rating questions about the current contract, a question asking members to list their top three priorities for the next agreement, and several open questions where people could write in what they want changed.

What members ranked as the top priorities

When members listed their top three priorities, wages came in as the clear #1. Almost 9 out of 10 respondents included wages in their top three, and wages were also the most common item people ranked first.

Right behind wages was health insurance. More than three quarters of respondents included health insurance in their top three. The third biggest priority was staffing, with a lot of comments pointing straight at maintenance staffing in particular.

After those top three, a smaller but still important group listed overtime, scheduling, and job security as top concerns.

How people feel about the current contract

The survey also asked members to rate three areas on a 1–4 scale. Overall contract satisfaction came in around the middle, but not great: about 63% rated overall satisfaction in the bottom half of the scale (1–2). Overtime and scheduling language also leaned negative: about 70% rated that area 1–2. But one item stood out as the biggest weak spot by far: shift differentials and pay. On that question, 87% of respondents rated it 1–2, and about two thirds picked the lowest rating. That’s a flashing red light. Even when people didn’t list shift differential in their top-three priorities, the ratings show it’s a widespread dissatisfaction point.

What members wrote in their own words

The write-in answers help explain the “why” behind the numbers. On wages and cost of living, one member put it bluntly: “Wages didn’t keep up with inflation.” Others specifically called for COLA language.

On health insurance, several people focused on the cost burden. One response said: “Company should pay all insurance like Chrysler. No weekly premiums.” Another was shorter but clear: “Lower insurance rates.”

On staffing, the pattern was hard to miss. When asked what single change would most improve their job, many responses pointed right at staffing levels, especially maintenance. One comment summed up what that shortage feels like day-to-day: “Maintenance short staffing is hurting us all.”

Overtime came through as both a fairness issue and a clarity issue. Some members wrote that the overtime policy is confusing, and others called out forced overtime directly. One response asked to “Redo the overtime system. It’s too complicated and the company and committee man can’t even figure it out sometimes.” Many described being forced heavy overtime month after month and reducing or changing forced weekend rules.

Time off and attendance also showed up constantly, especially because almost everyone answered the attendance question. A lot of members want: - more points before moving up in discipline levels, - paid personal days, and - personal days or unpaid days not to knock you out of good-attendance bonuses.

Overall contract satisfaction

2.3/5

avg. rating (n=58)

Overtime & scheduling fairness

2.3/5

avg. rating (n=58)

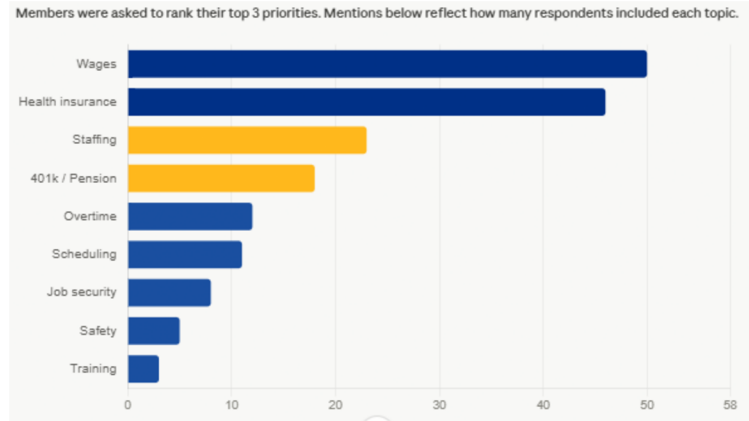
Pay structures

1.7/5

avg. rating (n=58)

Average Ratings Across All Responses

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IN YOUR OWN WORDS :

WAGES
 "Cola isn't enough or benefits need to be better."

OVERTIME SYSTEM
 "The overtime policy is overly complicated and should be simplified — uniform plant-wide."

ATTENDANCE & PERSONAL DAYS
 "Unpaid personal days should not count against or disrupt the 90-day attendance bonus."

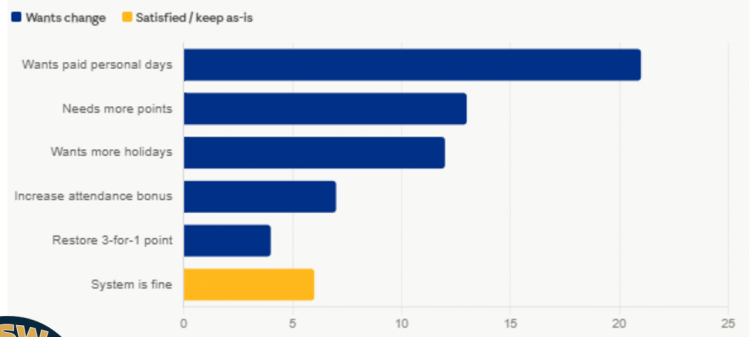
IN YOUR OWN WORDS :

PAY STRUCTURES
 "This .70 and .75 cent shift premium is pathetic. At a minimum it should be 2.5% for 2nd shift and 5% for 3rd."

MAINTENANCE STAFFING
 "Our short maintenance staff is killing us and them at the same time. Those folks need a lot more help."

PENSION
 "All employees need a pension. No motivation for skilled tradesmen to stay. High turnover is the result."

Open-text responses about the attendance system, coded by theme (n=58 respondents)



ARTICLE BY
 PAUL REEHLING

UNION HISTORY SPOTLIGHT

THE SONS OF VULCAN



A puddler draining steel from a furnace to create a ball of molten iron, which he will carry to the rolling mill to be fabricated into useful steel items.

The Sons of Vulcan were founded in 1865 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a time when the city was at the heart of America's iron and steel industry. Ironworkers worked in harsh conditions, had low wages, and little or no job security. They realized that together they could work to change these conditions, so a group of ironworkers formed the Sons of Vulcan, drawing inspiration from the Roman god of fire and metalworking as a symbol of their strength and solidarity.

Their main goals were to improve working conditions, secure fair wages, and establish safety standards within iron mills. Together they were able to negotiate more effectively with employers who previously held unchecked authority over their workforce. Among their accomplishments was the successful campaign for the eight-hour workday which

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benefited countless workers across many industries. Through strikes, negotiations, and tireless advocacy, the Sons of Vulcan demonstrated the power of organized labor, leading to wage increases, better workplace safety, and enhanced job security. These advances set important precedents for later labor movements.

Understanding the importance of unity, in 1876 the Sons of Vulcan merged with other ironworker unions to form the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers. This united skilled laborers nationwide, allowing for more effective bargaining and expanding labor protections. The legacy of the Sons of Vulcan lives on in today's unions, which still fight for fair wages, safer workplaces, and the rights of workers.

The Sons of Vulcan helped lay the groundwork for the broader labor movement and inspired generations to demand dignity and respect in the workplace. The principles that the Sons of Vulcan fought for are still relevant today. The Sons of Vulcan forged not only iron but also a legacy of unity and progress for American workers. Their pioneering spirit, and unwavering determination continue to inspire all those who strive for better, fairer workplaces, illustrating that collective action has the power to transform industries.



METAL MAYHEM

LOCAL 2958'S EDITORIAL CARTOON FEATURE



"When maintenance is short-staffed, everybody feels it."

LIFESTYLE SPOTLIGHT

ARTICLE BY
KURTIS COX

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Some of the biggest issues in equipment maintenance stem from the smallest problems. A sensor in the furnace gets dirty, a line becomes pulled tight, and the sensor sees an obstruction that isn't actually there. Often, simply cleaning that sensor returns the equipment to working order. Humans are much like machines in this regard.

When you get sick, a sensor fails, resulting in a loss of smell or taste, so you clean the sensor by drinking more fluids. When a joint aches, a sensor fails, and limits movement, so you clean the sensor with pain medication. When your eyes grow tired, a sensor fails, and lowers your focus and clarity, so you clean the sensor by stepping away from the screen.

These steps, however, are purely reactive. On the production floor, we shouldn't wait for failure—we prevent it by scheduling preventative maintenance. In the human body, a preventative maintenance routine looks like maintaining a healthy diet to prevent illness, exercising to keep joints mobile, and getting a full night's rest to prevent eye strain and fatigue.

But what happens when the control panel is flashing, yet the diagnostic



tools cannot find the faulty sensor? This is often the case with depression, anxiety, and loss of motivation. The warning signs are there and the line is pulled tight, but there is no obvious mechanical reason for the error code. In a complex system, a warning light without a clear cause often suggests that something deeper needs to be resolved. If a furnace is operating at excessive temperatures, for example, every sensor on the unit may start acting up. In that scenario, the fix isn't cleaning a sensor, it's adjusting the environment by turning the temperature down.

We can apply this same principle to our own lives. By acknowledging when the temperature is too high, we can take steps

to move away from the heat. Whether that means stepping back to recalibrate or hiring a specialized technician, such as a counselor or therapist, to look deeper into the system, these actions help bring our internals back to safe operating temperatures.

Ultimately, the goal of any preventative maintenance schedule isn't just to keep the machine running, it's to be proactive. This helps a well-oiled system to operate at its peak. The equipment itself isn't "broken" just because a sensor triggers an error, and the same applies to us. A proper preventative maintenance schedule ensures that when the line is ready to move, you are actually ready to run.

LOCAL UNION SPOTLIGHT:
CONGRATULATIONS GRADS!!



Brenten Mote
Carroll High School
Son of Jeremy (WG 10) & Yolonda Mote (WG 5) and brother of Brayden Mote (WG 5)

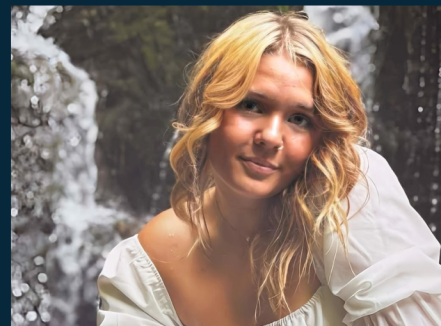


Ariah Tharp
Western High School
Daughter of David Hunt - WG 8
Varsity Cheerleader ~
Attending IUK for Criminal Justice.



Promise Ambrose
Knox High School
Daughter of Steven Ambrose - WG 5

Graduating Top Ten (#4) With Honors
Member of NJHS and NHS
Will be attending St. Mary's at Notre Dame
in the fall for Accounting



Brooklyn Smith
Kokomo High School
Daughter of Justin Smith - WG 5

Major: Nursing





ARTICLE BY
DAVID HUNT

UNION ACTIVITY SPOTLIGHT

LIVES > PROFIT

On March 19, 2026, the BP Whiting Refinery locked out 800+ USW members. The company and the union had been bargaining a new contract since January, but BP came to the table with 123 pages of concessionary proposals they claimed were necessary to cut costs and stay competitive.

The union bargained in good faith for a fair contract. BP did not. On March 2, the company delivered its Last, Best, and Final Offer—an attack on wages, bargaining rights, jobs, and worker protections. The membership answered with a resounding 98% NO vote on March 12.

Rather than respond with movement at the bargaining table, BP came back March 13 with an offer even worse than the first. The negotiating committee rejected it on March 17.

Two days later, BP responded with an illegal lockout of 800+ union workers.

Dave Tocco and I traveled to Whiting on March 30 to walk the line with our brothers and sisters. What we saw was solidarity. A local united, determined, and ready for a fight.

BP is trying to starve workers out and force them into desperation to win concessions. This is a company that made something like \$7.5 billion last year and \$57.9 billion in net income since the last contract with USW 7-1. Yet it still demands more.

That should tell every worker something. This is not just happening at BP. NIPSCO has now locked out over 1,600 of our members. The same corporate greed, the same pressure tactics, the same disregard for working people. And just like in Whiting, workers are standing strong. Many from our local have been on the line in Kokomo supporting the members of USW 12775, and it has been inspiring to witness. Remember, there may come a day when we need that same support.

Pay attention to what is happening. Prepare now for our own negotiations in 2028. Put a few dollars away each week. Be ready financially and mentally. We are bargaining with a massive multinational corporation, and we should assume they are preparing already.

We should be too.

Because when corporations put profit over people, workers have only one answer: **solidarity**.

LIVES > PROFIT



OUR MEMBERS OUT AND ABOUT ON THE PICKET LINES WITH OUR LOCKED OUT BROTHERS & SISTERS ALL ACROSS INDIANA.

DON'T FORGET! **SOLIDARITY FRIDAY!!**



Wear your union shirts on Fridays!! Show management that we stand as one on issues that affect all workers. Show them the power of the people!!

Raffle Results

March 2026
Darrell Martin
 (not present, prize rolled over)

April 2026
Duane Fort
 (not present, prize rolled over)

73 97

"MAKE THE SCENE. AND MAYBE LEAVE WITH SOME GREEN"

MAY MEETING DRAW JUSTICE A WINNER IS PICKED

USW WORK SAFETY **BREAKING NEWS**

USW SAFETY & HEALTH HAS A NEW SECOND SHIFT REPRESENTATIVE:
MICHAEL WRIGHT - WG6 - DEPT. 172

SAFETY & HEALTH CHAIR,
 KELVIN VAZQUEZ, FIRST SHIFT
 SAFETY & HEALTH (ALT), JIM RADER, FIRST SHIFT
 SAFETY & HEALTH, DANNY SHELTON, THIRD SHIFT



We're looking for more brothers and sisters to join our communications team! This group helps put together the newsletter, helps update the website and social media, and shares what's really happening on the floor and in the Local. You don't need special skills. Just a little time, a good eye for what matters to members, and a willingness to help. If you've ever thought, "I could help with that," this is your chance to jump in and make a difference. Email us at usw2958@gmail.com to volunteer!!



Happy Retirement

HONORING THE BROTHERS & SISTERS WHO BUILT THIS PLACE AND NOW MOVE INTO WELL-EARNED RETIREMENT.

- Scott Deeter**
 WG 13 - Clock # 25238
 35 years of service
- Tim Harris**
 WG 5 - Clock # 25312
 33 years of service
- David Diedrick**
 WG 8 - Clock # 25622
 30 years of service
- Carlo Tina**
 WG 13 - Clock # 25627
 30 years of service
- Barbara Leach**
 WG 5 - Clock # 25632
 30 years of service
- Roy Osborn**
 WG 3 - Clock # 25816
 27 years of service
- Merill Payne**
 WG 8 - Clock # 25867
 26 years of service