

Burleigh Bulletin

United Steelworkers Local 2-232 at Briggs & Stratton

Issue 6

October 10, 2019

UAW Leading the Way for Workers by president Jesse Edwards

It's never an easy decision for workers to go on strike. No one wants to do all-out battle with the company they work for. But sometimes you have to draw the line and say, "Enough is enough!" GM workers have reached that point.

They're fighting against the classification of workers as temps, for a pathway to permanent employment, for fair pay, and to stop the outsourcing of American jobs to low-wage, Third World countries without worker protections.

They're fighting to turn back the tide in this anti-worker economy. Their fight is our fight, and our international union has pledged its support and assistance at every level.

For years, we've seen corporations like GM receive handouts, tax breaks, and bailouts from the government while ordinary people have been



left out in the cold. While CEO pay reaches new and obscene heights, ordinary people's wages stagnate and decline.

The answer is for workers to band together and fight for a better future. UAW is showing the way, and USW Local 2-232 stands in full solidarity with GM workers.

It won't be easy, but we are confident that when workers dare to struggle, we dare to win.

Company Clueless on Mandatory Saturdays

No one at Briggs & Stratton has been keeping track of how many mandatory Saturdays the company has used in 2019. As we approach the contractual 18 Saturday limit in several departments, the union has begun to investigate in preparation for a fight, but no one in management can provide an accurate count.

To make matters worse, the implemented contract, which became official halfway through the year, changed the way mandatory Saturdays are tallied. According to the old language, mandatory Saturdays used anywhere in a given department would count against the total for the whole department. But the new language allows the company to mandatory

"by line," meaning there can be several different totals in a department with multiple lines.

In April, members who had worked mandatory Saturdays at Richard Street and Hope Street were relocated to Germantown (GDC). The company has said that the mandatory Saturdays they worked in their previous locations will carry over to GDC, so they will not face 18 new mandates beginning the day they were relocated.

After thoroughly investigating the total number of Saturdays worked by members in Germantown, in spite of protestations by the boss, the union has determined that there are only three remaining mandatory Saturdays at GDC in 2019.

Members at all three locations are fed up with the long hours. They're ready to take action.

New Stewards

Michael Giles has been elected second shift steward in Germantown. Michael is a fighter with a strong sense of justice. He's determined to make a difference.

Charles Riley is the 1st shift steward for Line 4 at the Burleigh Plant. He is a well respected member of his team who is not afraid to make a stand.

If you would like to take on an active roll in the union, contact your grievance representative, Chance Zombor, at:

262-844-3703
chance.zombor@gmail.com

Retirees Under Attack

Members who retired years ago and have been living off the pensions they earned at Briggs & Stratton are suddenly being told that someone miscalculated and they've been receiving too much in their monthly checks. Their checks are being reduced and they're being forced to pay back thousands.

The union has attempted to speak with both Briggs & Stratton and Fidelity regarding the matter, but neither have been cooperative. At least one retired member says he has hired an attorney.

These are honest people--our union brothers and sisters--who dedicated their whole lives to working for Briggs & Stratton and decided to retire based on numbers they were given. And now they're being treated like criminals, forced to pay restitution from a fixed income.

They're being preyed upon because they're defenseless. It doesn't seem like it should be legal, it's certainly not ethical, and the union is committed to doing everything in its power to help them fight back.

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Stop Anti-Protest Laws

The Wisconsin State Legislature is currently considering a bill (AB426) that would make it a felony to trespass for the purpose of protesting an "energy provider." The ALEC-modeled bill is aimed at stopping protests like Standing Rock, against harmful and destructive oil pipelines, and turning peaceful protesters into felons with lengthy prison sentences and fines.

Its supporters say the bill is "pro-worker" because it could potentially protect pipeline construction workers and operators against violent protesters. But there is no history of protesters using violence against workers, and there are already laws in place against violence.

Milwaukee Democrats Christine Sinicki and Jason Fields have co-sponsored the Republican bill, and the Building Trades and WI State AFL-CIO have come out in favor of it. But members of industrial unions like ours have nothing to gain and everything to lose by the degradation of our environment and the passage of repressive laws.

Membership Meeting:
Oct 20th, 9:30 - 11:00 am
633 S. Hawley Rd.

