



The Covington USW Local 8-675

NEW INFORMER

A STRONGER, WISER, FAIRER, DEMOCRATIC, & FOCUSED LOCAL UNION

One Unification Committee Member Speaks Out

"A Wake Up Call" by George Catlett

Brothers and Sisters,

I, like many of you, in my eighteen and a half years at the mill, didn't put much into our Union, other than going to hear the contract offers.

Ever since the disaffiliation vote in October, in which I did not cast a vote, this crisis that we are in has been on my mind. I could not answer questions that I was asked from CPU supporters about the USW and why I supported them.

In the early part of January of this year, I received a call from a good friend of mine. He asked me if I wanted to serve on the Unification Committee and said that he had recommended me. I said "what do I do?" He said that I would be part of a group that would stand up. I accepted.

When the Unification Committee met for the first time, I knew that I made the right choice in accepting the chance to be on it. Ever since then, I have gone to every meeting and each time I am reassured that the USW is for real about training and representing us. I have learned so much and realize that it is time we all have to step-up to the plate and help put Local 8-675 back together.

Each decision that we make is for the benefit of everyone. I can answer questions now that I could not answer before and if I do not know, I know how to find out. This local is going to be the best trained and supported Local in the country! This past Friday, the

committee was called to a special meeting for a conference call with the lawyers. They explained the options that we had on the NLRB charges.

We, the Unification Committee, discussed and made the decision to proceed with the elections. **The International staff did not make the decision, we did.** It was perhaps one of the most important votes that I have ever been involved in. It affected not only me, but everyone at the mill and their families.

In Recovery, I am in a minority. Jeff Crawford, a CPU supporter, said that one good thing that has come out of this is that people who were never active before have woke-up and got involved and he hopes that it will continue no matter who wins. No matter which side that you are on, remember, we all have to work together when this is over.

I believe in the USW and feel that it is the only choice to make for the future of everyone's livelihood. This was my wake-up call.

**Yours in Solidarity,
George Catlett**

Proud Member of USW LU 8-675

WHEN DO WE VOTE ?

Now that the Unification Committee and the USW have withdrawn our charges, it is up to the NLRB to schedule the actual election date.

Franklin IP President Corrects the Record

I want to make sure that the people of Covington get the facts on our recent contract ratification. I don't know why Rick Gibson printed what he did.

The fact is that we here at IP-Franklin are very satisfied with our Contract. We recommended that the membership accept it and they ratified it with a 70% favorable vote. Our membership was sold on the 80/20 healthcare improvement and the double time and a half on holidays. We got successorship language and that was a big hitter. The master agreement was a good deal. We recommended that too. Members liked the increase in the pension multiplier.

Contracts are not like they were in the 1970's and 80's. Things are not the same. There are some things in the contract we didn't like. But part of bargaining is give and take. Nobody's real crazy about the two-tier wage. It is what it is and we'll go after it in the next bargaining.

We were very satisfied with the way the USW handled negotiations. I'll say this about Director Stan Johnson. He's the best negotiator we've ever seen or been associated with. He had the most respect any negotiator ever had. They still talk about him.

I'm worried about Covington. I think unity is best and the Covington people can't go wrong with the USW.

**Larry Wise,
President USW LU 2-505
IP-Franklin, Virginia**

Jon Geenen to Lead National Paper Bargaining



On March 1, 2008, Jon Geenen will become the USW International Vice President with responsibility for national paper bargaining. Geenen, 48, began working in the paper industry in 1977 as an industrial apprentice at the IP mill in Kaukauna, Wis. He was active with the United Paperworkers (UPIU) and its successor union, the former Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy (PACE) workers international union, which merged with the USW in 2005. From 2003 to 2005, Geenen was the national director of paper bargaining. Prior to that, he was an international representative with PACE Region 10.



On Bargaining with MWV: “Strategically, our MWV locals in key mills have positioned themselves to change the way that the Company approaches negotiations. The alignment of so many key contracts, will translate into better agreements at each location if we unite together in our efforts. We all know this and so does MWV.”

On Covington’s Situation: “While the situation in Covington has created palpable tension and even disunity, there is still time to reunite and focus on our common problem, (which is) bargaining in a difficult environment where the quality of contract offers are directly related to the level of unity at both a facility level and a company level. The missteps that occurred in Covington, while painful, have been corrected and have made us stronger and even more united in our resolve to get a fair contract, with decent health care and employment security.”

On Contract Protection Clauses: “Anyone who’s taken a look at the Paper Industry knows that this is an Industry that’s facing change every single day. At a recent USW Sub-District meeting, twenty percent of the local officers there were from New Page, a company that didn’t exist a few years ago. It’s

absolute sheer fantasy to believe you can sign a long-term agreement without a Contract protection clause that doesn’t let the Company just walk away and get a little better deal in a sale at the expense of employees. Your current clause does not do that”.

On the IP Master Agreement: “Make no mistake about it, the IP mills themselves asked to do the master agreement.anyone who did not want to participate in it was free not to participate in it and then there was a second vote when it was done, to ask these 14 mills if the offer was good enough to bring forward to their members. It was 100% democratically done by our Local mills. They went back into their Mills and got sanction to do this.... They all agreed they’d bring it forward to the members and they would live with the collective result of that. They negotiate their local benefits locally yet.”

On Isolationism: “What we need...to get better agreements locally, is more pressure nationally and internationally.MWV is a global corporation. What we don’t need is isolationism tucked away in these beautiful mountains that you live in. What we need is to be connected and build solidarity with our Local Union’s across the country so we can deliver a good contract here.”

USW Strengthens Ratification

When International President Leo W. Gerard recently visited Covington a Local Member asked him if he would override a membership rejection of a contract offer. President Gerard’s response was an immediate NO.

President Gerard pointed out that the USW had actually strengthened the paperworkers ratification rights by changing the old PACE process. Under PACE rules, a local union could reject a contract proposal, but if they didn’t vote to strike by a 2/3rds margin, the International Union was required to sign the agreement. At the first Paper Bargaining Conference this was changed. Now a simple 50% plus 1 vote is required for a strike. This eliminates Local Union people from blaming a contract on the International Union and faces up to a strike when necessary.

President Gerard pointed out that this new process requires strategic bargaining, two-way membership communications and legal savvy to work to our members advantage.

USW FACTS

Largest Industrial Union in North America
850,000+ Members
130,000+ in Paper /Forestry
\$145+ Million Strike and Defense Fund
Direct Member Elections of Officers from the International President to Local Union Leaders

United Steelworkers International Union Departments

Associate Member Program
Civil Rights
Collective Bargaining & Development
Arbitration
Communication
Corporate Research

Education & Membership
Emergency Response
Legal
Legislative
Local Union Services
Organizing
Pension & Benefits

Political
Rapid Response
Retirees (SOAR)
Safety, Health & Environment
Strategic Campaigns, Global Bargaining & International Affairs
Women of Steel

Glenn Anglin: On Covington's Future

Former LU 675 President and Staff Representative

The division which exists in our Local Union today is without argument the deepest split of the membership this Local has ever encountered

We can't blame greedy corporate management or an anti-union political climate for our situation. We cannot look for solutions in the election of Democrats, the passage of new favorable labor laws or the bolstering of "American" competitiveness in today's world economy. We have only ourselves to blame and only we can fix it.

Some blame the CPU leadership for embarking on a "suicide mission". Some blame the USW for indifference and lack of support. In my humble

opinion there is enough blame to go around and neither party is without fault.

The NLRB will be setting an election date in the near future to determine who will be the bargaining agent for the Local Union. Regardless of the outcome of the election, the membership must find a way to bridge their differences and heal the wounds.

We need to breathe new life into this great local union and find a new spirit of strength and unity.

The groundwork needed to obtain a long overdue fair and honorable labor agreement can only be laid if this membership is one.

Together, we must heal and soothe, forgive and create anew. I feel these goals can best be accomplished by voting for the USW, when you consider the resources and strength of the USW and the MeadWestvaco Council.



Fraternally,
Glenn Anglin

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Unification Committee Meeting Schedule

The USW Covington Unification Committee meetings will be held at the Local Union Hall **each Tuesday**. Four meetings will be held to accommodate schedules

(7am–11am–2:45pm–3:45pm)

The goal of the Unification Committee is to reach out to build unity and strength through communications and information sharing.

USW Strike Benefits FACTS

Under the USW Strike & Defense Fund guidelines, Local 8-675 would receive approximately a \$95,000 lump sum per week. If the Strike went 10 weeks that would amount to just under \$1 million dollars. The Local Union is in charge of how these monies are distributed. Companies look at the resources of a Union to decide if they want to take them on. At \$141 million in our S&D Fund, the USW is a formidable foe. This is part of the strength that the USW brings Covington families.

GOT JOB ISSUES ?

Call the USW Staff

The USW Continues to Handle Collective Bargaining Agreement issues in Covington for ALL Bargaining Unit Employees.

Call USW Staff Representative

Luis Mendoza

Phone: 962-4971

Toll Free Phone: 1-877-511-8792



February 13, 2008

United Steelworkers Local 8-675
424 West Prospect Street
Covington, VA 24426

Phone: 962-4971
Toll Free: 1-877-511-8792
E-mail: local8-675@usw.org

We are pleased to be republishing the Local 675 Informer which was started in 1974 by Glenn Anglin, former Local 8-675 President, who eventually became an International Staff Representative and is now Retired. We hope the New Informer carries on the high standards and historic legacy that Glenn established over thirty years ago.

The New USW LU 8-675 Official Website is at "usw.org/covington"

Where Have All the Small Unions Gone ?

By USW Staff

When the AFL-CIO merged in 1954, they had 104 International unions and hundreds of small "directly affiliated" independent unions at single facilities. Today, the International Unions in America are less than 70 and the "Directly Affiliated's" have virtually disappeared. Some observers predict that the number of International's will ultimately drop to about 20 Unions.

The consolidation of unions in America has resulted from both a drop in overall union membership and the lack of resources necessary to represent working families in a global economy. (Note: Union membership increased slightly in 2007, for the first time since the 1970's)

The merger trends in labor are akin to the disappearance of the mom and pop grocery store and the corner gas station. You can't

take on a global corporations unless you have a global reach. Today, the USW is forming worldwide strategic alliances with other unions so we can meet global corporations with the power of a global union.

But the dream of small, less complex unions continues to be tried, and they fail. One of the latest was the effort by aircraft mechanics. They left the Machinists Union (IAM) because they felt their pay was being held back by contracts that included baggage handlers and ticket clerks. They founded the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA). Their first contract was spectacular, because they caught the Airline industry off guard. But when they went to bargain with Northwest last year, the situation had changed. Northwest demanded contract changes that were not

acceptable to AMFA and they went on a long strike. Using replacement workers, contractors and off-shore repair sites, Northwest crushed the strike and imposed their contract demands.

Within the Paper Industry, the Paperworkers on the West Coast split off and formed their own union. Now that Union has all but disappeared from the scene.

"Big" may create difficulties, but in a global economy, it's necessary. Successful Local Leaders have learned the skills that get them the focus and resources they need to take advantage of a big union.

It's great to restore an old Ford Model T and drive it around on Sunday's. But you wouldn't rely on it to get you where you need to go everyday.