

THE LOCAL CONNECTION



Happy Holidays!

101

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 4

LOCAL UNION 383, IBEW

DECEMBER, 1987

STEWARDS' MEETING PLANNED

Local 383 will be host January 28th and 29th to a two day Stewards Training and Seminar. Letters of invitation will be sent to all Illinois Bell and AT&T active Stewards along with their respective Area Representatives. The sessions should prove to be very informative for all. Members who have questions pertaining to Union matters may wish to forward them to their local office Steward or Area Representative who can present them during the discussion period.

DAY CARE SURVEYS

The Union Office is still waiting for your response to the Day Care Survey which appeared in the last issue of the "Local Connection". To date, only 48 Surveys have been received from both Illinois Bell and AT&T members. This is an indication to us that less than 3% of the bargaining unit is interested in this being a topic for Contract negotiations. If you are a strong supporter of the Day Care issue, you may want to encourage your fellow co-workers to fill out and return a survey to us.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Mental Health

WORKPLACE PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS PROBED AT HEALTH CONFERENCE

PORTLAND, Ore. - (by a BNA Staff Correspondent) - Northwest Specialists in employee relations and occupational health and safety turned out in record numbers Oct. 14 for a one-day workshop on the psychological aspects of occupational health and safety as part of the Annual Northwest Occupational Health Conference sponsored by the Northwest Center for Occupational Health and Safety, University of Washington.

The workshop was highlighted by presentations on job stress, depression and anxiety, problems of shift work, and dealing with difficult employees.

In the workshop's opening session, the growing problem of job stress in the workplace was outlined by Dan Hoeschen, Chief, Consultation Division, Occupational Safety and Health Administration and visiting lecturer at the Department of Environmental Health, University of Washington.

"Job stress is the least recognized work-related health risk in the country," Hoeschen said. He cited several surveys and studies demonstrating the growing scope of job-related stress. In one recent Louis Harris survey, job stress was attributed in part to the longer hours worked by many people today compared to a decade ago. Also, stress has increased as more husbands and wives enter the workplace, he said. In addition, new office technologies promise to increase, rather than decrease stress in the future.

Relative Problem

A difficulty with confronting job stress is that the problem is relative: "What is one person's meat is another's poison," Hoeschen said. Determining when a person is subjected to stress entails considering individual as well as work factors, he said.

Employees experiencing job stress exhibit various reactions, Hoeschen said. Psychological reactions



(cont. p. 3)

**PRESIDENT - BUSINESS MANAGER'S
REPORT
LYNDA K. HACKSTAFF**

1987 - Another year that seems to have slipped by. As President - Business Manager, it would seem appropriate to give you "The Year In Review," our record of win/loss, so to speak, with Illinois Bell and AT&T. But, I honestly don't feel like discussing the "thrill of victory and the agony of defeat" in this issue. Instead, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Union's Stewards and Area Representatives who have performed one heck of a good job for this membership.

They are the ones, who more often than not, do their jobs without even so much as a "hey, thanks." There is no monetary gain or real gratification to being a local steward, and many have been doing it for a long time. Whether you realize it or not, they are there to see that YOU are protected. Your contract provides you with certain rights, just as it does for the Company. It is an "AGREEMENT." Your

Stewards and Area Rep's help to see that the Agreement is kept by all parties.

There can be a lot of paper work involved, there can be some personal time that is forfeited, and there can be hard feelings displayed towards a job that can be described only as "thankless."

I would like to sincerely thank this Union's Stewards and Area Representatives who have made my transition to President - Business Manager a little easier. I have learned a great deal in the past ten months about being a leader. But, I have always known that my success is dependent on those who do the "thankless" job out in the field.

I do wish to express my appreciation for the support and confidence shown me by the membership and wish you a wonderful Christmas and New Year Holiday.

**IBT UPDATE
ASSISTANT BUSINESS MANAGER
ED BAKER**

**AT&T UPDATE
ASSISTANT BUSINESS MANGER
SUE JOHNSON**

The Success Sharing Plan (SSP) for Union eligible employees will make its first pay-out for plan year 1987 early in 1988. Page 133, Exhibit X of the Contract, explains the program in detail. Employees who are eligible to participate in plan year '87, should anticipate an approximate payout of at least 1% of their annual basic wage rate.

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Preparation for 1989 Collective Bargaining will begin soon in the Union office and I encourage all members to actively participate by submitting your ideas, concerns and suggestions for your contract. It's never too soon to prepare, and your input is vital for successful negotiations.

* * * * *

I would like to welcome Debra McGuffey as the new Area Representative for Area 6. She has been appointed to the position vacated by Bea Cooper, who recently resigned. Deb works in Oak Brook Marketing and can be reached there on (312) 574-5200 or at home on (312) 355-6116.

* * * * *

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a wonderful holiday season, with peace on earth and good will towards all!

Wedding bells have been ringing in Federal Systems in Downers Grove. Congratulations to Cindy (Pupillo) Lucas, Mary Ann (Putz) Lustig, and Pam (Jader) Grafagna. Also to Carol Frailey on the birth of her baby girl. Best wishes to Alberta Fronczak on her retirement with 30 years of service. I would enjoy printing news from all our AT&T locations, so please contact me with the current events from your office.

The Union was successful in reversing two recent dismissals from our Phone Store locations. A big welcome back to those two members.

Welcome aboard to Ray Schabell, our new Area Representative for Area 1 and recently appointed Executive Board Member.

Shirley Snyder, our former Area Representative for Area 2, recently resigned to take a position with ATTCOM in Springfield. The Union's Representatives, along with many members and the office secretaries, will miss the conscientious and dedicated effort she gave to our Union. We sincerely wish Shirley the best of luck. Ray Schabell and Kathy Siegrist will assist with Area 2 until such time as an appointment can be made.

With the Christmas season rapidly approaching, I sincerely wish all a wonderful and peaceful holiday. I would hope that local management will keep in mind the spirit of the holiday season and maintain a respectable level of cheer and good will towards all.

Health & Safety (cont. from pg. 1)

include anger, anxiety, confusion and depression. Behavioral reactions include alcohol and drug abuse, over eating, excessive risk taking, violence, higher job turnover, absenteeism, more accidents and lower productivity. Physiological reactions to stress include allergies, hypertension, upper respiratory infections, and coronary disease.

Hoeschen said that stress is often due to a combination of factors both on and off the job. The job component of stress can be exacerbated when work demands exceed an individual's capabilities.

Other workplace factors contributing to stress include overwork, underwork, repetitious short cycle work, lack of control, task ambiguity or rigidity, shift work, job insecurity, interpersonal conflict, piece work, and role conflict, Hoeschen said.

Prevention of job stress can be accomplished by supervisor and peer support, participation in job decision making, making the proper fit between the person and the job, and challenging an employee without overworking him or her.

A comprehensive strategy is important to alleviate workplace stress, Hoeschen said, and not simply a stress management program that concentrates solely on the individual. Many stress problems are due to the workplace structure and need system-wide solutions.

Confronting Depression on the Job

While the workplace is usually one factor accounting for a person's slide into depression, personnel specialists should know how to deal with such problems, participants learned in a session on depression and anxiety. J. David Kinzie, M.D., Department of Psychiatry, Oregon Health Sciences University, said that depression affects about 5 percent of men and 10 percent of women at some time during their lifetime.

Symptoms of depression include lack of energy, loss of interest, apathy, poor concentration, loss of sleep and appetite. "It's more than a down mood," Kinzie said. Usually, the problem lasts for at least several weeks, he added.

Those with depression can affect not only their own job performance, but others in the workplace too. "Depressed people are difficult people. Pep talks don't work. They are irritable and angry and will make others that way," Kinzie said. Co-workers often feel guilty about a depressed person's condition, and experience extreme guilt in cases of co-worker suicide.

Anxiety is usually less impairing than depression and involves phobias and panic attacks, Kinzie said. Another type of disorder, post-traumatic stress, can be difficult to deal with and difficult to treat, he said. Though technically an anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress involves memories of traumas such as war, rape, accidents. Though usually not work related, a work event can trigger the disorder that may have been dormant for some time, he said.

Symptoms of such stress include nightmares, lack of concentration, depression, alcohol and drug abuse, memories of the trauma during waking hours, and avoidance behavior.

While optimistic about treatment for depression through medication, Kinzie said treatment of post-traumatic stress is more complicated.

When asked how a supervisor can tell when an employee may be suffering from such psychological problems, Kinzie said you have to go by your feelings. For example, if you feel afraid of the person or very uncomfortable around them, maybe they need treatment. He suggested approaching the person and telling them that you have noticed a change in them and that they may have a treatable illness.

Hoeschen added that supervisors should not attempt to diagnose those with suspected psychological problems, but should base their suggestion for a psychiatric referral on the person's job performance problems.

Another conference participant asked for clues about when a troubled employee may harm himself or others. "Look for things that may negate the future," Kinzie said. Such symptoms may include doing irreversible things or "burning bridges," writing a will, brooding, isolation, and intermittent explosions.

Health workers, and paramedics in particular, can be prone to post-traumatic stress. When asked what indicators to look for in such employees, Kinzie said nightmares can be a good indication of problems.

Dealing with Difficult People

In a session on dealing with angry and negative people, consulting Portland psychologist, Lawrence Al Siebert, said employee relations persons need to establish a professional level of empathy and try to understand the difficult person's point of view. Why, for example, does the person want to be negative or angry? How do they benefit from such behavior?

A partial solution to an unusually negative person is to ask them to critique a particular plan or program, Siebert said. Use their critical thinking to help identify and solve problems, he said.

In a related session on meditation of interpersonal conflicts, participants were told that third-party intervention can help resolve conflicts. "Meditation is a mode of thought...You help others make decisions," said Jay Folberg, a lawyer and professor at the Northwestern School of Law, Lewis and Clark College. By discovering what the real interests are for each party, the mediator can help them develop other options to achieve their objectives rather than the one that is unacceptable to the other side, he said.

Report on Mental Stress Claims

A week prior to the conference, the Oregon Department of Insurance and Finance released a 29-page report on mental stress claims in the state covering the past six years. The report noted that

Health & Safety (cont. from pg. 3)

2,569 mental stress claims were filed from 1980 to 1986 and that 71 percent of the claims had been denied. Of the claims granted from 1982 to 1986, some 45 percent were from state and local government workers; women outnumbered men, and one-third of the claimants were in the 30-39 age bracket.

Of the claims granted by the Workers Compensation Department in 1985 and 1986, 36 percent were from technical, sales and administrative support workers; 29 percent were professionals and managers; and 20 percent from service occupations. The average total cost of claims during the period was \$12,364, or 2.7 times the average for all claims.

An in-depth analysis of 140 mental stress claims paid in 1985 revealed that eight were associated with traumatic incidents. Poor company personnel practices accounted for 17 claims, including such claims as a female warehouse parts picker who was accosted by her male supervisor, who bit her earring off.

Labor-Management Conflicts Top Claims List

The largest group of stress claims awarded in the year were due to labor-management conflicts. Prior to filing their stress claims, many employees in this group also filed grievances or litigated over various types of discrimination or disciplinary actions. Examples of this group of claims include a male vocational counselor with a history of disciplinary actions who filed a stress claim after yet another disciplinary action taken against him.

Some 18 claims were filed in cases where the employee said stress caused a physical disorder, such as hypertension or ulcers. Another 25 claims were characterized by "job burnout," such as a 30-year old female fast food restaurant manager who complained of insomnia and appetite loss due to job pressures.

Shift Work Problems

The problems of shift workers were examined in a session with Robert Sack, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry, Oregon Health Sciences University. Shift work is contrary to the natural 24 to 25 hour biological clock built into all of us, Sack said. Changes in body temperature and chemistry respond to natural "circadian rhythms" triggered by such cues as the light/dark cycles, and perhaps seasonal cycles, he said.

In the United States, 26 percent of men and 18 percent of women work variable shifts, and such workers have higher rates of alcohol problems, use sleeping pills and tranquilizers at higher rates and report more job stress and emotional problems, Sack said. Shift workers also report social isolation, and suffer from sleep problems, gastrointestinal disorders, and run a higher accident risk, he said.

Sack's suggestions to mitigate the problem of shift work included matching the most adaptable people to the job and using younger workers. Shift work

becomes more difficult as we age, he said. Also, it appears that three-week rotations are better than one-week rotations. It is still unclear if people ever fully adapt to permanent night shift work, he said.

Bright lights are being experimented with to test their affect on adjusting the body's light/dark cycle.

Changes in Oregon's Job Stress Claims Law

In response to a growing number of workers' compensation job-related stress claims, the Oregon legislature changed the state's definition of mental disability this past session. Now mental disorders may not be compensated if they are due to "reasonable" disciplinary actions, said Karli Olson, a Portland lawyer, in a session on the legal aspects of stress claims.

Participants were advised to keep good records because future cases will turn on the question of whether disciplinary actions were "reasonable." Also, it is important to document off-the-job problems employees may be having, she said. In some cases, employees with substantial home and personal problems have claimed that a mental disorder is due solely to workplace stress. With the right documentation, employers can prove the contrary, she said.

Concern was raised by some participants about the confidentiality of employee assistance program records. Olson said that in some cases, employers have subpoenaed records to document off-the-job problems.

LOCAL 383, IBEW

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AT&T

Raymond Schabell Kathy Siegrist



**UNIT MEETING SCHEDULE
JANUARY**

383.6 SUNSET BOWL, WAUKEGAN
TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 5:30 P.M.

383.2 GODFATHER'S PIZZA, PEORIA
THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 5:30 P.M.

383.1 AMBASSADOR INN, DECATUR
TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 7:00 P.M.

383.5 VFW, ELK GROVE VILLAGE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 6:00 P.M.

383.4 UNION OFFICE
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 6:00 P.M.

383.3 BRUN'S RESTAURANT, NEW LENOX
THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 6:30 P.M.

FEBRUARY

383.6 ROCKFORD ELK'S CLUB
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 5:30 P.M.

383.2 STARDUST MOTEL, MOLINE
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 5:30 P.M.

383.1 AMBASSADOR INN, DECATUR
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 7:00P.M.

383.5 VFW, ELK GROVE VILLAGE
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 6:00 P.M.

383.4 UNION OFFICE
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 6:00 P.M.

383.3 HOLIDAY INN, HARVEY
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 6:30 P.M.

HMOs

**HOUSE PASSES BILL TO REVISE HMO LAW
BY REMOVING EQUAL CONTRIBUTION RULE
(From BNA-Benefits Today 11/20/87)**

The proposed Health Maintenance Organization Amendments Act of 1987 (HR3235), which would revise the federal HMO law by eliminating the equal contribution rule, was passed by the House after a suspension of the rules Nov. 3.

HR3235 was supported enthusiastically by HMOs at a Sept. 30 hearing held by the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health and Environment. The subcommittee approved the bill at an Oct. 1 markup, and the full committee approved it with clarifying amendments Oct. 6.

Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif), sponsor of HR 3235, said in a statement on the House floor that an employer would not have to contribute to an HMO the same dollar amount the employer contributes to indemnity health plans. Instead, contributions would be based on a particular HMO and its enrolled employees, he said.

HMOs would have more flexibility in their physician services, corporate structure, and the rating system used in determining premiums, Waxman said. Finally, the bill would prohibit states from imposing requirements on federally qualified HMOs that would stop the organizations from meeting the federal qualification standards. □

Parental Leave Won for 45,000

A contract recently negotiated between the Clothing and Textile Workers (ACTWU) and the Clothing Manufacturers' Association provides up to six weeks of unpaid leave in the case of birth or serious illness of a child. Some 90 percent of the 45,000 workers covered by the agreement are women.

The worker is guaranteed a job upon return from leave, and health insurance coverage will be maintained during the leave period.

'PHONE-Y' DRUG SALE

(Reprinted/BNA Weekly Union Labor Report)
October 15, 1987

An employee was terminated with just cause for arranging illegal drug sales over a company telephone, rules arbiter Barbara Doering.

The employee was arrested at his home for agreeing to deliver cocaine to an undercover police agent. Management later learned from the police that the worker had received two phone calls at work from the undercover agent to whom he sold the drugs. According to the police, both calls were related to the worker's drug dealings. When the employee admitted that the calls had taken place, management terminated him for using paid time and company property to conduct illegal drug activities. Protesting the dismissal, the employee argued that he had not been proven guilty of the offense for which he was arrested, and that he had merely received, not initiated, the phone calls at work.

While "it has long been held that employers should not seek to regulate employees' private lives away from the workplace and that minor brushes with the law outside work should not subject an individual to employment penalties," arbiter Doering says, "the potential impact of an employee who distributes illegal drugs cannot be ignored merely because he is apprehended away from the job." Similarly, the fact that an employee is caught "in an off-duty raid at his residence does not prove the individual had no inclination to sell drugs at his place of work or would not do so in the future," the arbiter adds. "Whatever the eventual result of the criminal proceedings," the arbiter concludes, "the company has demonstrated just cause for discharge in this case." (Union Oil Co. and OCAW Local 7-157, 89 LA 1)

Age Discrimination

EEOC PROPOSES RULES ON ACCRUALS FOR WORK PAST NORMAL RETIREMENT AGE (From BNA-Benefits Today 11/20/87)

Proposed regulations requiring many employers to continue making contributions to pension plans for those workers who have reached normal retirement age were approved by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Nov. 3.

The rules, which will be sent to the Office of Management and Budget before they are issued officially, will be effective Jan. 1, 1988, according to EEOC. The commissioners unanimously approved the regulations to implement pension accrual provisions of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 amending the Age Discrimination in Employment Act.

OBRA amended ADEA, ERISA, and the tax code to require employers to continue the contributions, allocations, and accruals in pension plans for employees who work beyond their normal retirement age. The law requires no change in employee benefit plans until Jan. 1, 1990, for collectively bargained benefit plans.

The proposed regulation says pension plans can limit the years of service or participation to be taken into account in determining benefits as long as the limits are not age-related.

Since OBRA amended three separate laws, it also provided for consistent regulations to be issued by the three agencies with jurisdiction over the statutes—EEOC, the Department of Labor, and IRS. IRS was given lead regulatory authority over a major portion of the regulations, but the EEOC's regulations, which will be published shortly in the *Federal Register*, will be the first to be issued. □

THE EDITORS CAN'T DO IT ALL ALONE:



Status Report: Labor's List Of Pending Legislation

Airline LPPs H.R. 3051, S. 1485	Airline LPP provisions passed both the House and the Senate as amendments to airline consumer bills. on 10/5/87 in the House and on 10/30/87 in the Senate; the bills are awaiting conference.
Catastrophic Health H.R. 2470, S. 1127	H.R. 2470 passed the House on 7/22/87; S. 1127 passed the Senate on 10/27/87; the bills are now awaiting conference.
Davis-Bacon H.R. 2216	Labor-supported bill. approved on 8/4/87 by the House Education & Labor Committee; hearings were held in the Senate Labor Subcommittee.
Double Breasting H.R. 281, S. 492	H.R. 281 passed the House on 6/17/87; S. 492 is awaiting a mark-up by the Senate Labor & Human Resources Committee.
Drug Testing S. 1041	Approved by the Senate Commerce Committee on 3/10/87. and passed the Senate on 10/30/87 as an amendment to S. 1485.
Family leave H.R. 925, S. 249	H.R. 925 reported by the House Education & Labor Committee on 11/17/87. awaiting action by the Post Office & Civil Service Full Committee; the Senate Labor & Human Resources Committee has begun hearings on S. 249.
Hatch Act Reform H.R. 3400	Passed the House on 11/17/87.
High-Risk H.R. 162, S. 79	H.R. 162 passed the House on 10/15/87; S. 79 approved in committee. and awaiting floor action.
Mandated Health Benefits H.R. 2508, S. 1265	H.R. 2508 referred to House Education & Labor Committee; S. 1265- awaiting mark-up by Senate Labor & Human Resources Committee.
Mergers & Acquisitions H.R. 2172, S. 1324	Hearings held in the House Energy & Commerce Committee; S. 1324 approved by the Senate Banking Committee.
Minimum Wage H.R. 1834, S. 837	H.R. 1834 is awaiting subcommittee mark-up in the House Education & Labor Committee; hearings have begun in the Senate Labor & Human Resources Committee.
Pay Equity H.R. 387, S. 552	H.R.387 referred to Post Office & Civil Service Committee; S. 552 approved by the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee on 11/18/87.
Pension PBGC	A labor-supported Pension PBGC measure was included in the House Reconciliation bill which passed on 10/29/87; a similar Senate provision is awaiting a floor vote.
Polygraph Testing H.R. 1212	H.R. 1212 passed the House on 11/4/87; hearings have been held in the Senate Labor & Human Resources Committee.
Railroads LPPs H.R. 3332	Referred to the House Energy & Commerce Committee.
Retiree Bankruptcy Protections H.R. 2969, S. 548	H.R. 2969 passed the House on 10/13/87; S. 548 passed the Senate on 7/24/87; the bills are awaiting conference.
* Telephone Monitoring H.R. 1950, S. 1124	Hearings on H.R. 1950 have begun in the House Judiciary Subcommittee; S. 1124 referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee.
Trade (Omnibus) H.R. 3, S. 1420	Differences in the bills which passed the House and Senate are being worked out in conference.
Trade (Textiles) H.R. 1154, S. 549	H.R. 1154 passed the House on 9/16/87; S. 549 is awaiting floor action.
Welfare Reform H.R. 1720	H.R. 1720 is awaiting floor action; hearings are underway in the Senate.
Worker Dislocation H.R. 1122, S. 538	These bills were reported by the House and Senate Labor Committees. but the issue had also been rolled into the omnibus trade bills, which are now in conference.

SEASON'S

GREENINGS



Kathy Fitzgerald
Sue Johnson
Joan Somer
Ed Baker
Lynda Hackstaff
Jayne Daly
Deb McGuffey
Ray Schabell
Pat Jones
Rose Ann Edwards
Lisa Versluys
Adele Sharp
Sally Fohrman
Val Hobson
Mike Kohn
Rick Corum
Kathy Siegrist

During the Holiday Season more than ever, our thoughts turn gratefully to those who have made our progress possible.

And in this spirit we say, simple but sincerely,

**Thank You and Best Wishes
for a Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year**