



THE ACCORD

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1

UAW AMALGAMATED LOCAL 2145 NEWSLETTER

January 2010

Welcome and Greetings!



Editor's Welcome

On behalf of the newsletter staff I would like to extend a welcome to all readers of this publication. This newsletter is for you.

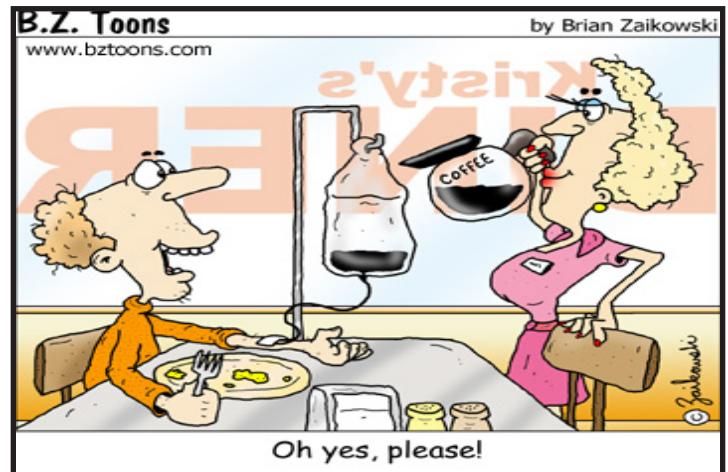
With this and upcoming issues we hope to bring an awareness of issues that relate to you and your union participation. Coverage of union events, schedules, fun articles, and much more are planned as the publication proceeds.

We want your feedback as well. Is there something you would like to see in your newsletter? Let us know! You can send suggestions and/or story ideas to our email address:

accordnewsletter@yahoo.com.

Our first issue will be largely devoted to introducing your newsletter staff and highlighting a few upcoming events. So please, get comfortable and enjoy!

- Ryan Vanderstelt, Editor



*****Remember*****
Regular monthly General Membership meetings are held every 3rd Thursday of the month in the Steketees building @ 5:30pm. Stop in to actively participate in your union membership!



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Meet the Local 2145 Accord Newsletter Team!



Hello from your newsletter team!

Please take a moment to read the mini-bios below to learn a little about us!



Janice Hilliard - I enjoy what I do everyday. I have been with BCBSM for 13 years, holding various positions from Membership and Billing clerk to Field Service Specialist in Provider Consultant Services. From 1996 – 2009, in the UAW world, I served as an Alternate Steward, EAP Benefit Representative, Vice President and in 2003 I began my elected roll as the President for UAW local 2145. I love reading, photography and bowling, but currently I spend all my spare time running after my two-year-old son. (Janice Hilliard earned her Bachelor of Science in Business from Davenport University)



Cornelius Coleman - I have been with BCBSM for 25 years. I have served in many areas including Customer, Provider and Marketing. When I started back in '84, I worked in Customer for about a year and was given the opportunity to take a supervisor's job in South Lyons service area. I was there for about a year and a half and decided to come back to West MI .

I have been involved with our local 2145 serving as VP under Sandy Smith and currently under Janice Hilliard. I am currently in the Key and Large group area.



Ryan Vanderstelt - I have been with BCBSM for two years and enjoy the opportunity to help people every day. My interests include reading, writing, playing games of strategy, and spending time with my daughter, Jillian-

Ryan attends Grand Valley State University pursuing a major in business.

Comments...Suggestions...Story Ideas? Contact Us!

We are looking for newsworthy articles!

If you have something you would like to see in *The Accord*, send it to us at:

accordnewsletter@yahoo.com

All articles are subject to approval, review, and editing. Articles must be submitted to the email address above.

No handwritten articles will be accepted.

Editorial

LUPA 2009 – Learning, Laughs, and a Little Slice of Heaven

I had no idea what to expect when I was first informed that I would be attending the 2009 Labor Union Press Association conference. Initially, a mental picture formed of this upscale resort where men and women in strict business attire wandered from room to room, martinis in hand, slapping each other on the back and congratulating one another on another successful year. What I actually found was a much more relaxed, stately environment that ran with an undercurrent of strength.

Upon arrival, (about two hours late due to some last-minute well wishing by my in-laws and some faulty information a la Map-quest) I discovered just how seriously the common good of all UAW members was taken here. My little Chevy Aveo, having just carted me over 300 miles, was not allowed to enter the complex. The reason behind this, as I was to find out later, was that the car's manufacturing had taken place in Mexico. And since UAW had their livelihoods dispatched out of the country to make it, my car was dispatched to the dreaded "Outer Lot".

Once taken to the main building and assigned my room, I was directed to the dining hall where, in an adjoining conference room, UAW President Ron Gettlefinger was giving a rousing speech to the assembled members. Feeling a little out of place in this beautiful setting that was more hunting lodge than cafeteria, I finally met up with my party from our local 2145. The initial warning to go easy on the food (a gain of 8 pounds being expected for newcomers) went unheeded that night and most of the rest of the week. It was not long before I met my roommate, Chuck, employee of an Ohio car parts manufacturer. After initial pleasantries and a very long first night listening to Chuck's rendition of a rusty woodchipper, things settled into a place of comfort.

The next week was spent in classrooms, meetings, and in enjoying one another's company. The classes offered ranged from digital photography to basic editing to web design. Two editors of the UAW Solidarity newsletter, Jennifer John and Emily Everett, led my morning classes. These women were some of the most dedicated people I have ever met. They cared very highly for all things union and were committed to providing for the betterment of UAW members everywhere. As jobs get outsourced and the American worker becomes less "economically viable" for many major corporations, these two put themselves on the front line in the information war for the sake of our members.

My afternoon class, Basic Digital Photography, provided much



useful information in "telling the story" through pictures. The stunning surroundings, building and natural preserve alike, were the true classroom. Assignments came in the form of beautiful photos and grades in the form of praise given by the other local union members as the photos were displayed.

This is not to say seriousness reigned entirely here. The one theme that kept on returning to me was this: Solidarity is not just the name of a newsletter to those who attended. It is something very strong, and very real, held onto strongly in the hearts, attitudes and motivations of these dedicated workers. As "Union Brothers and Sisters" there was a warm family atmosphere as well. There were indeed pats on the back as I had imagined, but the suits and stuffed shirts were replaced by comfortable attire, much of which proclaimed the names and attitudes of their respective locals.

Fun was to be had in the free times. I signed myself up for a sound whipping in a pool tournament, but regretted not a minute of it.

What I want to leave you with on this whole experience is this: You are not alone. There are many, many UAW members like yourselves working very hard to help promote the strength and unity of our union. These are people who pride themselves on doing their job, and doing it well, so that people like you and I may carry on what we have known for so long as the American Dream. So be strong, stand up for what you believe in and know that when you stand, your union fellows across the country stand with you.

- by Ryan Vanderstelt

Did You Know...

- The UAW was founded in 1935.
- Union members make approximately 21% more than non-union members in our field of service
(“The Union Advantage” Sept. 2008, UAW Research Department)
- Vested pensions were bargained for and won the same year the Korean War began (1950)

Guest Article

Stress and Wellness - Maintaining the Balance

by Marian Crittenden

Much is being said today, and rightfully so, about the importance of taking better care of our physical health. The media outlets consistently report on the record-breaking numbers in the problems of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Reality shows such as the "Biggest Loser" and "The Doctors," along with a multitude of magazine articles, internet sites and radio broadcasts devote themselves to these important topics.

A renewed aspect of wellness that is gaining focus is the importance of maintaining a balance between our physical, mental, and spiritual health. These aspects of our being are intrinsically connected and one cannot be ignored or neglected without some consequence to the others.

For example, unmanaged stress has been known to cause or contribute to some of the following physiological problems: chronic fatigue, insomnia, irritable bowel syndrome, hypertension, migraines and increased susceptibility to colds and flu due to inadequate immune responses. Left unmanaged, stress can also lead to serious mental health issues that may require treatment.



An important first step in combating these stress-related problems is recognizing the warning signs. Some of the symptoms of unmanaged stress are: irritability, restlessness, overeating, poor appetite, difficulty focusing and concentrating on tasks, forgetfulness, overmedicating, heavy drinking, muscle soreness, tension headaches and excessive worry.

Managing stress, and thereby improving one's physical health, usually requires changes in our thinking, behaviors, and lifestyle. "Eating to live instead of living to eat," for example, is one way to change one's thinking. Regular exercise or joining a gym and/or getting a personal trainer are examples of behavior and lifestyle changes.

We must arm ourselves with information about stress. Most of us have heard that stress is our reaction from a perceived or real threat or change. More often than not it is many smaller stressors coming together (like unresolved relationship conflicts, worry about loved ones, finances, and changes in the workplace) that take a toll. A wise person said, "It's not the Mountain ahead that wears us out, but the grain of sand in your shoe."

Incorporating some of the following changes into your wellness strategy will likely improve the quality of your life by helping you manage your stress levels.

- Watch the company you keep, attitudes are contagious. Associate with individuals who have a sunny disposition and positive outlook on life.
- Count your blessings; there are others who would love to be in your shoes. Practice an attitude of gratitude. When you find yourself focusing on the negative, remind yourself of the good things.
- Set goals for your life, they will help give you purpose and direction.

- Take some quality time for yourself, do something that you enjoy or that is relaxing or pleasurable.
- Stop worry in its tracks, try positive self-talk. Reinforce the need to live in the now and know that worry does not change the circumstance; it changes you for the worse.
- Don't sweat the small stuff in relationships; remember no one is perfect, including you.
- Make a conscious decision not to get worked up over traffic or other people's bad driving skills.
- Forgive often and forgive much. It is very liberating. Unforgiveness is like an emotional anchor that weighs you down.
- Avoid alienating and isolating yourself. Have at minimum one or two positive people that you can confide in.
- Take care of yourself physically by exercising, eating properly and getting adequate rest.
- Learn to say no to requests when your plate is already full. Overextending ourselves is a huge source of stress.
- Last but not least, do not be afraid to reach out for help if you begin to feel overwhelmed or are experiencing persistent anxiety. Remember that we have an Employee Assistance Program that is free, confidential and accessible 24 hours a day from anywhere in the US. Just call 1-888-277-2583.



We have all probably experienced feeling like we were at the end of our proverbial ropes, but remember: even a counselor has needed a counselor on occasion.

"Down-Time" Sudoku

		5	3	6		7		1
	4	3		1		8	5	
9					2			
5	9	8			6		3	
	1						7	
	3		5			2	6	8
			1					6
	6	4		7		9	8	
3		2		8	9	4		

Place the numbers in the blanks so every row, line, and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 without repeating any numbers. *Answers will be given in the following issue!*

**Congratulations to all of 2009's
Local 2145 retirees!!**

BCBSM

Joann Finazzi

Dennis Cox

Mike Reynolds

Charlene Ahart

Lynn Bilski

Sandy Powney

Judy Zakrzewski

Pauline Woronko

Joyce Bailey (12/31/09)

Sharon Vanderwoude

Jacquelyn Dillard

BCN

Roger Mott

Deb VanZalen

Carol Hendrickson

John Shackleton

EVENT SUCCESS!

**2009 Homeless Veterans Christmas
Party**

Sponsored by UAW Region 1-D

(in conjunction with the Health Care for Homeless
Veterans Program)

As the Holiday Season drew nearer, we made preparations to provide a great holiday meal and gifts of warm clothing, blankets, etc. for the homeless Veterans in Grand Rapids.

Many donated items were given to this wonderful cause!

If you wish to volunteer your time for future events, contact Suzanne Duran at 616-712-6494 after 4pm or Norma Homes 269-214-1504 after 6pm.

Let's give back to those who have already given us much!

**Shop for Quality-Select
Union-Made Products!**

*This year, whether you are looking for the perfect gift or the supplies needed for your special family occasion, look for **Union-Made** and support union workers of America! Some examples:*

LAWN BOY - HWY. 575 Plymouth, WI 53073 -

Brand Names: LAWN BOY **Union:** UAW **Local:** 1291

WHITE-WESTINGHOUSE ELECTRIC CO - Elkhart and
Cornersville, IN

Brand Names: WHITE-WESTINGHOUSE **Union:** IUE-CWA
Local: 999 **Description:** HOUSEHOLD COOKING UTENSILS

ANCHOR HOCKING GLASS CO. - 1115 WEST 5TH ST.
Lancaster, OH

Brand Names: ANCHOR GLASS **Union:** 72 **Local:** 25
Description: GLASS

DOW CHEMICAL CO. - 47 Building MIDLAND, MI 48667

Brand Names: SARAN WRAP **Union:** 72 **Local:** 12075, Dist. 2
Description: PLASTICS

GE APPLIANCES DIV. GENERAL ELECTRIC CO. -
APPLIANCE PARK Louisville, KY 40225

Brand Names: HOTPOINT, SPACEMAKER, PROFILE LINE
Union: IUE-CWA **Local:** 761 **Description:** HOUSEHOLD
COOKING UTENSILS

CATHEDRAL CANDLE CO. - 510 KIRKPATRICK ST.
Syracuse, NY 13208

Union: 72 **Local:** 1262306 amalgamated

Description: NONDURABLE GOODS

Online Ordering: <http://www.cathedralcandles.com>

PILLOWTEX - Hwy. 61 Tunica, MS 38676

Union: UAW **Local:** 6519 **Description:** BLANKETS, COM-
FORTERS & BEDDINGS

Online Ordering: <http://www.pillowtex.com>

RUBBERMAID - 1147 AKRON RD. Wooster, OH 44691

Union: 72 **Local:** 302L, Dist. 1 **Description:** RUBBER
PRODUCTS

Find these and more at www.unionlabel.org