



The Union Eye

NEWSLETTER OF GAS WORKERS UNION LOCAL G-555, UTILITY WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO

★ A Message from The President ★

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Russ Mazzola on his retirement and to thank him for his service and the hard work he has given to Local G-555. As many of you know by now, Russ has resigned as Executive President of our Local effective May 1, 2016 and will be retiring on July 1, 2016. I have worked with Russ for many years. He has been a valuable member of this Union and will be greatly missed. I wish him all the best.

For those of you who do not know me, my name is Eddie Hall. I have served as your Executive Treasurer for seven years and for the past year as Executive Vice-President. With Russ's retirement, I have assumed the responsibilities of Executive President. I welcome the challenge and look forward to working with your Union leadership to keep our Union strong.

Take some time to read this Newsletter and if you have questions or concerns please call me or the Union office.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the shops or Union meetings.

Fraternally yours,

Eddie Hall, Executive President
Gas Workers Union Local G-555
Utility Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO



GAS WORKERS UNION LOCAL G-555

UTILITY WORKERS UNION of AMERICA,
AFL-CIO
www.G-555.com

EDDIE HALL
EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT

ROBYN ARBOGAST
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

RESSIE SMITH
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

PAUL TALBOO
EXECUTIVE TREASURER

WIL SOTO
BUSINESS MANAGER

7777 EXCHANGE ST., SUITE 11
VALLEY VIEW, OH 44125
PHONE: 216.328.0154
FAX: 216.328.0368
UWUA_G555@sbcglobal.net



www.UWUA.net

What is Old, becomes NEW



Newsletter of the Natural Gas Workers Union

Affiliated with Service Employees' International Union, Local 555 • A.F.L.-C.I.O.

We would not be where we are today without the hard work, dedication, and sacrifices of those that came before us. To pay homage to those who built this Union, we are happy to announce that our newsletter will once again be named, "The Union Eye". The Union Eye was the official newsletter of the Natural Gas

Workers Local 555, SEIU going as far back as the Presidency of John D. Nagle in the 1960's. The original logo, as shown above, was re-designed by your Executive Treasurer, Paul Talboo to give it a more modern look and to incorporate the new logo he designed for the Local in 2014. This leadership group is dedicated to improving communication with our members and this "new look" newsletter is one of the many things we have planned for you in the upcoming months. We thank our past leaders and hope that you enjoy reading the NEW Union Eye Newsletter.

AS OF JUNE 1st, 2016 LOCAL G-555 HAS 1178 MEMBERS



The Union Eye

NEWSLETTER OF GAS WORKERS UNION LOCAL G-555, UTILITY WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO

LIMA WAGE PARITY

As many of you are aware, the pay scale for our Lima District members was 8% below the rest of the G-555 wages. Local 308 merged with Local G-555 in 2012. Local 308's wages at that time were 11% below G-555 wages. The 2015 contract brought the wages to an 8% difference. We are thrilled to announce that the Union has negotiated a new wage increase for our Lima Brothers and Sisters to get them to the G-555 wage rate by July 1, 2017. Lima will receive an additional 5% increase on July 1, 2016 and the remainder of the raise will be given on July 1, 2017.

REMINDER: WELLNESS PROGRAM

Just a reminder that you and your spouse must have your annual physicals and self-assessments complete and processed by July 31, 2016 in order to avoid the extra \$400 premium next year!

GRIEVANCE ARTICLE 8.2

The Union was successful in a grievance for the interpretation of Article 8.2 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Article 8.2 states, any hours worked over 8, in a 24 hour period, is to be paid at the rate of time and one-half. This applies to being scheduled two shifts in a 24 hour period or being scheduled to come in earlier than your normal start time. It does not matter that you are given 8 hours rest. The 8 hour rest rule only applies if you have worked a consecutive 16 hours (Article 8.10).

Please note: this does not apply if you have volunteered to work those hours or it is the start of a new schedule pick.

JOINT ACCIDENT REVIEW PROGRAM

The Company and Union entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to address the issue of vehicle safety. Preventable motor vehicle accidents have been on the increase recently. To develop a safe driving culture at Dominion East Ohio, a Joint Accident Review Committee was formed. The Committee will include at least one Union Executive member or designee, a member of the Safety Department and a General Manager and/or Director. The purpose of the Review Committee is to determine the root cause of the accident and adopt ideas to prevent a similar occurrence. Neil Lenhart from the south and Mick Prendergast from the north will represent the Union on the Committee.

DID YOU KNOW?

The only person to serve as President of the Local longer than twenty years was Bill McCarthy

HRA UPDATE

Our current Collective Bargaining Agreement provides for an individual Health Reimbursement Account (HRA), with a benefit of \$1800 per year for 2016, 2017 and 2018. If you were hired after January 1, 2016 and prior to July 1, 2016 your benefit will be \$900 this year. This money can be used for most out of pocket medical expenses. Please be aware that the date of service cannot be more than one-year-old in order to be eligible for reimbursement.

A new HRA account was also negotiated for those that retiree in 2016, 2017 or 2018. The retiree HRA account will provide \$1500 per year for five years or until you reach age 65. The retiree HRA is a separate account from your active HRA account. Both accounts will be administered by the Utility Workers Union of America, National Health and Welfare Fund, which is TIC International. When you request reimbursement after retirement, you will need to designate which account you want the reimbursement to come from. It is advisable to use up your active HRA account first so it does not go dormant. The advantage after retirement is you can also use either HRA account for your medical premiums.

For employees who retire on or after January 1, 2016 that are age 65 or older or who reach age 65 during their retirement will have access to retire medical plans in the open market through One Exchange, a private health insurance exchange. An annual retiree stipend will be provided into an individual HRA account for eligible retirees. The HRA will be funded annually by Dominion for individuals who enroll in coverage through One Exchange.

JOB SELECTION PROCESS

The Union has filed 17 grievances so far this year. Eight of those grievances dealt with the job selection process. Last year 32 total grievances were filed. Ten of those grievances dealt with the job selection process. We are obviously having issues with the Company's Targeted Selection Process. In all but two of the cases, we were able to satisfactorily resolve the issues, but not without a struggle. It is apparent the Company needs to re-evaluate their job selection process.

RETIREMENT SESSIONS

Retirement sessions for those who will be 55 years old by the end of the existing CBA were held June 6-9. Of the over 500 invitees, 223 G-555 members participated in these sessions.



The Union Eye

NEWSLETTER OF GAS WORKERS UNION LOCAL G-555, UTILITY WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO

UNION OFFICE UPGRADES

We have expanded our Union office in Valley View, Ohio from 1600 square feet to 2600 square feet. A five-year lease was signed, with no rent increases, for \$2100 a month. This extra space has given us the opportunity to add a classroom style room to hold Executive Committee meetings.



This space can also be used for educational classes and will be used for our Wage and Grievance meetings during contract negotiations.

SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Safety Advisory Committee consists of four members of the Executive Committee. They are Ressie Smith, Rob Newsome, Dominic Rios and recently retired Jim Triska. Jim will be replaced by the newly elected representative from Eastern Shop, Mike Watkins. Jim gave over 40 years of dedicated service to this Union. He was a valuable member of the Committee, a mentor to many, a friend to all and he will be missed. Congratulations to Jim on his retirement; we wish all the best to him.

UNITED WAY

Thanks to all for your support of purchasing tickets for the United Way Sports Basket donated by the Union. \$992.00 was raised by the Union and given to United Way. A special thanks to Val McCullars and Wil Soto for visiting the shops and helping with the ticket sales. The winner of the basket was Anthony Desciscio from C&M Northeast shop.

JOB POSTINGS & PROMOTIONS

Over the past two years we've averaged over 100 union promotions per year! That is a testament to a skilled workforce, as well as a strong Union. Also during that time, we have improved the way job postings are communicated. Not only are they posted at your shop, now every job posting is emailed to all of the Union Reps. In addition, all job postings are now numbered so they can be tracked easier. If you have a question about a particular job posting, contact your Local Union Rep.

VACUUM TRUCK DEPARTMENT



The Vacuum Truck Department has been very successful and busy since it was established in the Spring of 2015. The crew on the Vac Truck can repair leaks, replace service lines and cut services without having to get

in the ditch. When working with concrete, a core truck pulls a plug out of the concrete and the repair is made with little or no restoration.

The typical Vac Truck crew consists of a three-man team.

The Company recently purchased a fourth and larger vacuum truck at a cost of over \$500,000 to accommodate the extra work. The Union has also



negotiated a new Mechanic classification (Vacuum Truck Mechanic Specialist) with a higher specialist wage rate in order to service the highly specialized trucks.

UPDATED JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Twenty-year-old job descriptions were revised for three departments. GM&R, Dispatch and Leak Detection job descriptions were updated to reflect current job functions and duties. For those who qualify, the new GM&R job description allows for a shorter time frame to progress through the department. All reference to leak detector equipment operators working as C&M Helpers was eliminated. Along with the Vacuum Truck Mechanic Specialist classification mentioned above, the Union was also successful in resurrecting the Natural Gas Vehicle Specialist A classification as the need arises for those job duties.

www.G-555.com

Coming soon to your computers and hand-held devices will be **www.G-555.com**. The Local has purchased the shorter and easier to remember web address to host the soon to launch new website. BMA Media Group on May 18, 2016 is finalizing the design and adding additional functionality as you read this.



UWUA REGION II & III EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Utility Workers Union of America held their Region II & III Educational Conference in Cleveland at the Westin Downtown from June 2nd – June 4th. The focus of the conference was a return to basics; educating members on Stewards' rights and responsibilities, collective bargaining, digital communications and much more. Local G-555 had a nice showing of participants, with 18 (shown below) who went through the



From L-R: Eddie Hall, Robyn Arbogast, Rick Higinbotham, Debbie Moffitt, Ressie Smith, Neil Lenhart, Kelly Nalbach, Rob Newsome, Terri Brown, Paul Sandella, Jim Triska, Mick Prendergast, J. J. Popio, Josh Thornton, Jim Davis, Paul Talboo, Dominic Rios, Russ Mazzola, Jody Chapek, Mike Watkins

workshops and presentations over the 3-day conference and guests, Russ Mazzola & Jim Triska who attended to see our former labor lawyer, Todd Smith (shown below), who performed a "History of Labor through Song". Todd was our main contact at the Labor Law Firm of Schwarzwald & McNair and represented Local G-555 for the better part of two decades. Todd gave great insight into the creation of what is now the Utility Workers Union of America while mixing in great Labor Songs from different eras and even some songs that he penned himself. For more on the History of our National Union, there is a great History section that can be found on the UWUA's website at the following web address:

<http://uwua.net/who-we-are/an-informal-history-of-the-uwua.html>



Musician & former G-555 Lawyer, Todd Smith

Who knew? To open the Conference, the entire assembly was treated to a stirring rendition of the "Star Spangled Banner" performed by our very own Executive Treasurer, Paul Talboo (right). Paul admitted that this was the first time that he has ever sung the National Anthem in public, but was honored to have been asked to perform it in front of his brothers and sisters in his hometown of Cleveland, Ohio.



Paul Talboo sings the National Anthem

A large portion of the plenary sessions of the conference dealt with the need to develop a digital media presence and strategy to be successful in communication with our members in the twenty first century. The National has made a partnership with **m. media** to develop and execute a new digital media strategy for the UWUA. With an emphasis on getting timely information, high-quality video and graphics out into the digital world, the UWUA hopes to become a trend-setter in this area, rather than continuing to deny that most members receive a majority of their communication and news digitally. This is something that the Local is taking to heart. In the next few months you will begin to see Local G-555 take a step forward when it comes to our digital presence. Again, we highly anticipate the launch of the new website, www.G-555.com, as well as a venture into having a facebook page dedicated to, and maintained by the Local leadership. We hope to really make an effort to engage our members via digital & social media going forward.





LOCAL G-555 GIVES BACK

In May, members of the Local G-555 Young Workers Committee spent a day at the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank, volunteering their time to assist those less fortunate. They packaged 555 lbs. of paper products and boxed up 1635 lbs. of canned goods which equals 1363 meals for the needy in their community. In addition, the Local



From L-R: Neil Lenhart, J.J. Popio, Tamara Davis, Josh Thornton, and Paul Talboo

donated a total of \$600 to the five Ohio food banks that cover almost 100% of our service territory. Checks were sent to the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank, Second Harvest Food Bank of the Mahoning Valley, The West Ohio Food Bank, and The Southeast Ohio Food Bank. These donations could account for up to 2400 additional meals



for the food insecure members of the communities in which we live and work. While we are excited to help those less fortunate, we are appalled that in the state of Ohio, so many go hungry. We will continue to do what we can, but until the issues of wealth inequality and lack of living-wage jobs in this area are addressed with real solutions, we are only placing band-aids over severed limbs.



ELECTION RESULTS

On June 23, 2016 a Special Election was held to fill the unexpired terms of the offices of Executive Vice-President and Cleveland District Chairman. The successful candidate for Executive Vice-President was **Robyn Arbogast** and the successful candidate for Cleveland District Chairman was **Craig Vernon**. Candidates that ran unopposed for their respective positions and who have already assumed their new roles include; **Mike Watkins** – Cleveland District Representative (Eastern), **Charity Bugaj** – Cleveland District Secretary, & **Greg Carrico** – Ashtabula District Sergeant-At-Arms. Congratulations to all of the above-named candidates as they assume their new positions in the Union.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE, 2016 LOCAL G-555 RETIREES

Ms Jeanmarie Bainey	1/1/2016	Ms Linda L Hardy	3/1/2016
Mr Jay K McLouth	2/1/2016	Ms Jill Renee Natale	3/1/2016
Mr Charles E Yancy	2/1/2016	Ms Vicki L Strauss	3/1/2016
Mrs Marcia L Burky	2/1/2016	Mr Arthur J Johnson	4/1/2016
Mr Dennis G Blatnik	2/1/2016	Mr David J Stelmach	4/1/2016
Mrs Christine M Lorenz	2/1/2016	Ms Joann Dubaniewicz	4/1/2016
Mrs Marjorie J Currence	2/1/2016	Mr Mitchell L Smith	4/1/2016
Mr Joseph L Brownlow	2/1/2016	Ms Mary J Ludwig	4/1/2016
Mr Wayne M King	2/1/2016	Ms Michaelanne Becht	4/1/2016
Mr Robert J Godec	2/1/2016	Mr Daniel T Hilditch	5/1/2016
Mrs Joan M Brachvogel	2/1/2016	Mr Mark A Rogers	5/1/2016
Ms Marcia L Thornhill	2/1/2016	Ms Patricia A Wasser	5/1/2016
Mr Clement E Whitson	2/1/2016	Mr Frank D Dowling	5/1/2016
Ms Susan K Vorhies	2/1/2016	Ms Melvina L Linder	5/1/2016
Mr James P Sullivan	3/1/2016	Mrs Mary H Bodiford	5/1/2016
Mr Dennis Bilyk	3/1/2016	Ms Jean A Oehlstrom	5/1/2016
Mr Michael D Helfrich	3/1/2016	Mr Jeffrey M Gill	6/1/2016
Mr Daniel F Horwath	3/1/2016	Mr Denis D Tripp	6/1/2016
Mrs Jo Ann Cline	3/1/2016	Mr Charles R Dewey	6/1/2016
Ms Sandra L Harto	3/1/2016	Mr Gino P Cavatino	6/1/2016
Ms Melena Moody	3/1/2016	Ms Patricia A Fink	6/1/2016
Mr Richard L Apicello	3/1/2016	Mr Rodney L Bayer	6/1/2016
Mr Ed J Gladyszewski III	3/1/2016	Mr James E Triska	6/1/2016
Mr Patrick G Hearn	3/1/2016	Mr Charles D Cielensky	6/1/2016



The Union Eye

NEWSLETTER OF GAS WORKERS UNION LOCAL G-555, UTILITY WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO

Coming Soon: www.G-555.com



REMINDER:

THE DOMINION PICNIC
AT CEDAR POINT
IS SATURDAY, JULY 9th

