



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,

Your Executive Board has had a busy and exciting year in 2017. We have had multiple Union Elections, implemented a new training program for our Union Representatives, counseled a large number of newly retired members, oriented numerous new hires and have spent many hours administering the Collective Bargaining Agreement. There never seems to be enough time in the day. In addition, the entire Executive Board has been spending a substantial amount of time dealing with charges and challenges filed by members regarding various union matters. The following charges/challenges were filed by four of our members in recent months:

- Brother Craig Vernon (FMS - Northeast Shop) filed an election challenge of our Executive Board Elections held in October 2017 regarding the Executive Vice-President and Business Manager positions. An Investigative Committee was appointed from our Executive Committee, per the Election Challenge Provision in the UWUA Constitution. The Investigative Committee conducted a hearing, took testimony from witnesses, wrote a report and recommended that all parts of Brother Vernon's election challenge be dismissed. The eligible members of the Executive Board voted to approve and adopt the Investigative Committee's report and recommendations, and subsequently certified the election of Robyn Arbogast as Executive Vice-President and Wil Soto as Business Manager. Brother Vernon filed an appeal to the decision with the UWUA National Union. The National Union has concluded that Brother Vernon "was unable to provide any evidence of wrongdoing that could have affected the outcome of the election for any of the Officer positions". The UWUA National Union Executive Committee has certified the results of the election and dismissed all of Brother Vernon's allegations.
- Brother J.J. Popio (FMS - Akron Wilbeth Shop) filed an internal charge against Sister Kristi Grossholz, involving conduct during the October 2017 Executive Board elections. Per the Local G-555 Bylaws, the Executive Board served as the Trial Committee. After a thorough investigation the charge was dismissed, as the charge had no merit. Per the Local G-555 Bylaws, J.J. Popio appealed the decision to the Akron District. That appeal was heard at the Akron District meeting held on January 17, 2018. The appeal was dismissed by a vote of more than two thirds of the members who voted at the meeting. Brother Popio has indicated his intention to appeal this decision to the UWUA National Union.
- Brother Claude Bailey III (FMS - Eastern Shop) filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board against the Executive Board for allegedly failing to fairly represent him. As of this writing, it is the Local's understanding that Brother Bailey has requested that his charge be withdrawn.
- Brother Jody Chapek (FMS - Western Shop) has brought an internal union charge against the entire Executive Board for allegedly "interfering with elected representatives in the performance of their duties, interfering with the rights of members, improper performance of duty, malfeasance and unbecoming conduct". The charge filed provides no specifics regarding Brother Chapek's allegations. Brother Chapek filed this charge with the UWUA National Union which has assigned National Representative Rich Cossell to investigate. As of this writing, this charge is pending.

It is the opinion of the Executive Board that each of these charges/challenges lack merit. The Union has utilized the services of a Labor Attorney to properly handle each of these challenges or charges, as we take these matters seriously. We will provide updates on the status of these matters in the future editions of *The Union Eye*.

While the Executive Board respects the right of all Union Brothers and Sisters to utilize both internal and external resources available to them if needed, it is important to remember that most issues can be resolved without the added time and expense involved with formal charges. The Executive Board and the Wage & Grievance Committee now need to spend all their time, energy and resources on the upcoming contract negotiations. We look to you, the members, for your support, cooperation and unity in the coming months.

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

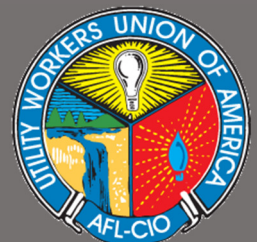
ROBYN ARBOGAST
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

MICKY PRENDERGAST
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
info@G-555.com



www.UWUA.net



The Union Eye

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

CONTRACT SUGGESTION SURVEY

The Contract Survey is set to be mailed to each member's address at or about the same time as this publication. Please take the time to give us your input. You can fill out the hard copy or complete the survey online at www.G-555.com in the MEMBERS SECTION; the password to the MEMBERS SECTION is: **G-555**. Please also consider signing up for text and email alerts while at the website so that we can better keep you updated on the upcoming negotiations and other important issues in the future. Remember... Our **STRENGTH** is in our **UNITY**.

AKRON MEETING TIME CHANGE

The Akron District has changed their meeting time to 6 p.m. Meeting dates and a downloadable calendar can be found on www.G-555.com on the AKRON DISTRICT page. The location currently remains at the UAW Hall at 1155 George Washington Blvd. in Akron, but that location is subject to change due to the building being up for sale. We will continue to book the Hall month to month and will inform the membership if a change is required.

NEW PHILLY MEETING LOCATION CHANGE

The Dover/New Philadelphia – Marietta District Union meeting has changed locations beginning in January of 2018. The meetings will now be held at the R&S Party Center, 115 Front Ave. SW, New Philadelphia, OH 44663. Meeting times and dates remain unchanged and can be found, along with a downloadable calendar at www.G-555.com on the DOVER – NEW PHILADELPHIA – MARIETTA DISTRICT page.

DOT DRUG TESTING CHANGES

The Department of Transportation has included several new drugs that some of our members will be tested for starting January 15, 2018. These changes will affect Dominion employees that are part of FMCSA or PHMSA. The new drugs that will be tested for are hydrocodone, oxycodone, hydromorphone, and oxymorphone. These are highly prescribed pain medications and, according to the DOT, were added due to the current opiate crisis that our country is enduring.

UNION REP TRAINING

We had our second training class for our Union Representatives on January 23rd, 2018. Almost all of our Reps have now been through this class and we have received nothing but great feedback. Steve Wyatt, a Labor Consultant/Trainer from our National UWUA, attended our last class and he was very impressed with its content. Steve was also able to give us some valuable insight and gave us additional ideas for future classes, which most certainly will be integrated into our next training session. We plan on having another class later this year, after our March elections, in the event there are any new Representatives elected and for any current Reps that were unable to attend one of the two classes that we have already had. Additionally, we would also like to make this class available for our Union Stewards in the future.

DID YOU KNOW?

All Local G-555 members who are enrolled in Supplemental Life Insurance are entitled to have a will prepared for them at no cost. Metlife offers this through its Company, Hyatt Legal Plans. For more information, contact Hyatt Legal Plans at 1-800-821-6400.

UNFAIR LABOR PRACTICE SETTLEMENT

LOCAL G-555 OBTAINS A SIGNIFICANT SETTLEMENT FROM DOMINION IN UNFAIR LABOR PRACTICE CASE

As a Union represented employee, under federal labor law, you have the right to Union representation when Dominion conducts an investigatory interview in which you reasonably believe the interview will result in you being disciplined. Under the law, it is up to you to request Union representation in these circumstances, and your Union Representative has the right to actively participate on your behalf during the interview. These are known as your *Weingarten* rights. You can also refer to Article IX of the CBA to provide you with certain rights to Union representation when it comes to possible disciplinary actions by Dominion.

In July of 2017, two Dominion supervisors conducted an investigatory interview of a G-555 member at the Western Shop. The supervisors violated our member's rights by refusing to permit his Union representative to actively participate in the interview. The Local filed a charge with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), against Dominion, for violating the member's *Weingarten* rights. The NLRB found that the Union's charge had merit. Before the charge was processed further, G-555 obtained a significant settlement with Dominion in December of 2017. Under the settlement, Dominion agreed to provide the two supervisors with additional training on the proper way to conduct investigatory meetings, to hold a meeting between the G-555 Executive Board and top Dominion officials to talk about the conduct and protocols for investigatory meetings, to post a notice at the Western Shop advising our members that Dominion will not require their Union Representatives to remain silent at investigatory meetings, and to reimburse the Union for the attorneys' fees it paid in preparing for and providing affidavits to the NLRB in support of the charge, which is a very rare occurrence.

UTILITY WORKER PROTECTION ACT

HB 276: A BIG WIN FOR UTILITY WORKERS IN OHIO

The Ohio House of Representatives has overwhelmingly passed, by a vote of 94-3, legislation that provides added protections for utility workers while performing their jobs. Ohio House Bill 276, also known as the "Utility Worker Protection Act", expands the offense of aggravated menacing to prohibit threatening a utility worker with a deadly weapon with the intent to obstruct the operation of a utility, and increases the penalty from a misdemeanor to a felony. This Bill is something our Union, along with the Company and state lobbyists, has been working on for quite some time now. In September, Executive President Hall and Executive Treasurer Paul Talboo went to Columbus to give our membership a voice amongst a room full of utility lobbyists and Government Affairs leaders when it comes to the safety issues our members face every day. We were the **ONLY** union voice at the table asking Utility Companies to fight with us. Now that the Bill has passed in the House, it will be heard by the Senate. Our sources indicate that it is expected to overwhelmingly pass again and that, when it lands on the Governor's desk, he is expected to sign it into law.



LOCAL G-555



YEAR END NUMBERS

AS OF JANUARY 1st, 2018 LOCAL G-555 HAS 1160 MEMBERS

LOCAL G-555 HAD 49 RETIREMENTS IN 2017 & 6 MORE IN JANUARY OF 2018

THE LOCAL G-555 EXECUTIVE BOARD, ELECTED OFFICERS & ALL OF ITS MEMBERS THANK OUR RETIREES FOR ALL THEIR YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE

Retiree Name	Retirement Date	Service Yrs.	Retiree Name	Retirement Date	Service Yrs.	Retiree Name	Retirement Date	Service Yrs.
Thomas M. Priest	1/1/2017	26	John L. Thompson	4/1/2017	33	Dannie L. Newland	9/1/2017	31
Ronald K. Casada	2/1/2017	37	Lee E. Winnett	4/1/2017	26	Ralph J. D'Amico	10/01/2017	38
Alan C. Claybrooks	2/1/2017	38	Terry B. Blevins	5/1/2017	34	Steve D. Fisher	10/01/2017	40
Brian C. Hale	2/1/2017	30	Donna S. Falatok	5/1/2017	26	Jeffrey L. Korns	10/01/2017	38
Alex W. Huston	2/1/2017	37	Seldon L. Farnsworth	5/1/2017	37	Joyce L. Morales	10/01/2017	33
Brian K. Lindsey	2/1/2017	38	Inga Draudt	6/1/2017	42	Thomas P. Sheehan	10/01/2017	31
John Lovelace	2/1/2017	44	Dale L. Haren	6/1/2017	24	James M. Kline	11/01/2017	48
Sam Niro Jr	2/1/2017	48	James A. Perk	6/1/2017	39	John W. Kutnar	11/01/2017	38
Donald A. Oehlstrom Jr	2/1/2017	27	Edward V. Gerzina	7/1/2017	31	John Michael Quinn	11/01/2017	40
Anthony D. Singleton	2/1/2017	36	Paul P. Gingo	7/1/2017	37	Terry Lee Watt	11/01/2017	25
Philip J. Yan	2/1/2017	30	Bonnie S. Wightman	7/1/2017	33	Carl M. Douglas	12/01/2017	38
Gerald L. Buccioni	3/1/2017	30	Clyde D. Wolfe	7/1/2017	40	Fletcher L. Molden Jr	12/01/2017	34
Charles E. Deak	3/1/2017	27	Dennis L. Beam	8/1/2017	22	Edward C. Budd	1/1/2018	44
Margaret Jean Lewis	3/1/2017	42	Rodney A. Guerriero	8/1/2017	25	Joseph S. Hernandez	1/1/2018	44
David M. Marshall	3/1/2017	27	Bonita C. Newell	8/1/2017	38	Carol Y. Hewlett	1/1/2018	31
Marilyn E. Rivers	3/1/2017	36	William B. Risner	8/1/2017	24	David M. Mattiuz	1/1/2018	40
Karla J. Gadley	4/1/2017	35	Michael D. Skwarski	8/1/2017	25	Mary Anne McGinness	1/1/2018	26
Donna M. Ruther	4/1/2017	33	John P. Fishley	9/1/2017	39	Michael J. Scianna	1/1/2018	25
Scott W. Spangler	4/1/2017	28						

LOCAL G-555 HAD 77 NEW HIRES IN 2017

WE WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS TO THE LOCAL AND HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL SOON AT YOUR SHOP OR MONTHLY DISTRICT UNION MEETING

COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL LIGHT-UPS PERFORMED BY G-555 MEMBERS

2015 - 20,306 | 2016 - 19,018 | 2017 - 20,310

2017 GRIEVANCE NUMBERS

29 TOTAL GRIEVANCES (27 FILED IN 2017, 2 CARRIED OVER FROM 2016)

- **SUCCESSFUL – 12** (4 SATISFACTORILY RESOLVED PRIOR TO THE GRIEVANCE BEING HEARD)
 - **REQUESTED ARBITRATION – 1**
 - **PENDING – 3**
 - **AWAITING ANSWER - 1**
 - **DENIED BY THE COMPANY - 12**

LONE WORKER INITIATIVES

There is nothing more paramount than the safety of each and every one of our members. The Lone Worker Committee is a collaborative effort between G-555 and Dominion, to address the ongoing safety issues that our members are constantly faced with. Below is a list of initiatives, dealing with both urban and rural issues, that the committee is working on. Most of these will be rolling out in the first or second quarter of 2018.

- **Safe Choice:** Our members in the field will have an armed, off-duty police officer providing roaming security in various areas. This will first be rolled out in the Cleveland area with the intention of expanding this to other cities in our territory. Contract terms and conditions are currently being worked out and there will be training for our members prior to implementation. Anticipated rollout is the first quarter of 2018.
- **Live Safe:** This is a new iPhone app that will be used for notifying and messaging our members when there is an incident or safety issue that pertains to them. Anticipated rollout is the first or second quarter of 2018.
- **De-Escalation Training:** This training, with key components being verbal de-escalation and awareness, was presented to the Lone Workers Committee on February 12th, 2018. The expectation is that this will be rolled out in a similar fashion to the Bulli Ray training.
- **SPOT Devices:** This device would have the capability of sending an alert in the field in areas where there is no cell phone coverage for our members, including Emergency 911 notifications. Testing is currently being done in WV, Marietta, Belmont, Lima, Ashtabula, and E.55th Street. Implementation is targeted for the first quarter of 2018.
- **GPS Mapping:** Currently, IT is working on a mapping project for Dispatch. In the event of a safety incident in the field, Dispatch would be able to immediately identify which vehicles are in that area and communicate the need to remove themselves from that area. Completion is scheduled for the end of the first quarter, 2018.
- **Proactive Customer Communications:** Currently we do not notify customers when our members are going to be performing pipeline maintenance work on their property. The Company is working on a plan to alert customers of the planned work and a general timeframe of when that work will be completed. Implementation is targeted for the end of the first quarter, 2018.

PLEASE VISIT THE G-555 WEBSITE AT www.G-555.com MEMBERS PASSWORD: G-555
& IF YOU ARE ON FACEBOOK, PLEASE LIKE THE OFFICIAL G-555 PAGE: www.facebook.com/LocalG555/



PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO FILL OUT THE MEMBER'S CONTRACT SURVEY & SIGN UP FOR EMAIL / TEXT UPDATES. SURVEYS CAN BE TAKEN ON THE WEBSITE AT www.G-555.com & HARD COPIES WILL BE ARRIVING VIA U.S. MAIL.