



NEW 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,

It has been over three months and writing this has not gotten any easier. Micky's untimely passing has affected all of us that knew him and who served with him. His loss has created a massive void that will take time to fill. He was an integral part of our team. Mick's death has placed an undue burden upon the rest of the Executive Board and members of the Executive Committee, who have been asked to assume Mick's duties and keep business moving, while having to personally deal with this tragedy at the same time. It has been hard. I want to thank all of those who I've had to ask a little more of, for stepping up in the time of need. I also want to thank all of the members who took the time to pass along their condolences not only to his biological family, but also to his union family; it gave us some comfort knowing that our union can show the best of itself in trying times. The members' generosity removed the burden of the cost of his celebration of life from Micky's family. Members donated over \$3150 to help the Prendergast family and the family has expressed their sincere gratitude for everything you, the members, went above and beyond to do to assist them during this ordeal.

If you have not already received yours, a notice of upcoming nominations for a special election to fulfil the remainder of Micky's term as Executive Secretary, as well as a few District Board offices, including the one Micky held as the Cleveland District Treasurer should be arriving at your home via US Mail. Filling Mick's shoes is not an easy thing to ask, but here I am again asking our dedicated officers and members to step up in the Union's time of need. It is my hope that a dedicated and qualified candidate, who is intent on working for the betterment of this Union, accepts this call to duty and is elected to fulfil the remainder of the open term as Executive Secretary and all the other open positions on the District Boards.

Please take an opportunity to read about some of the things that we have been working on over the second half of 2018 and know that this Union will continue to work every day for the benefit of our members.

Fraternally yours,

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



AS OF JANUARY 1st, 2019 LOCAL G-555 HAS 1134 MEMBERS



**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
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NEW LOCAL G-555 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

We are proud to announce two new committee appointments; Jim Davis, Canton District Representative, has been named to the UWUA National Health and Safety Committee, where he will serve as the Region III Delegate representing the Gas Industry. Also, Jim DeNigris, Cleveland District Representative, has been named to the Joint Accident Review (JAR) Committee, which has been instrumental in helping to reduce vehicle accidents across the company. Congratulations to Brothers Davis and DeNigris; we know they will do a great job.

CHARGES & APPEALS UPDATE

Tammy Stewart (Formerly FMS – Wilbeth) filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge against the Executive Board for allegedly failing to represent her. That charge has since been withdrawn.

Brother John Farrell (FMS – Eastern) filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge against the Executive Board for allegedly refusing to bargain in good faith for him, stemming from a grievance that was filed. That charge has also since been withdrawn.

UTILITY WORKER PROTECTION ACT

As had been previously addressed in our last issue of “The Union Eye”, our Local was fighting hard to try to get legislation passed in the Statehouse that would increase penalties for crimes committed against Utility Workers. Over 600 of our members signed a letter asking the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee to support House Bill 276. We cannot thank you all enough for putting names to the dangerous job we choose to do every day to provide safe and reliable gas to our customers across the state. While we made a valiant effort to try to get the bill before the Senate, unfortunately, the session of the state congress in Ohio ended before a vote could be called on HB 276. This is not a failure as we have opened the eyes of many legislators to the perils our members and others in the utility industry face on a day-to-day basis. We plan on picking up where we left off when the next session of congress begins in 2019. We will do everything we can to continue to build support for this legislation and, hopefully, get this bill passed in the new year. We will continue to keep you updated on our progress.

SPECIAL ELECTION NOTICE

Please be advised that there will be a Special Election to be held in the last week of March, 2019 to fill the unexpired terms of three positions currently vacant in the Local. The positions to be filled are as follows: **EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, CLEVELAND DISTRICT TREASURER, and NORTH CANTON DISTRICT VICE-CHAIRMAN.**

Nominations for **EXECUTIVE SECRETARY** will be taken from the floor of the regular February monthly union meetings in all districts. In addition, nominations for **CLEVELAND DISTRICT TREASURER** will also be taken at the February Cleveland District monthly union meeting and nominations for **NORTH CANTON DISTRICT VICE-CHAIRMAN** will also be taken at the February North Canton District monthly union meeting.

The official Notice of Nominations should currently be posted on the union boards at all shops, is available to view on www.G-555.com and [facebook.com/LocalG555](https://www.facebook.com/LocalG555), and is being mailed to each members' last known address. Please email Elections@G-555.com if you do not receive your Notice of Nominations.

The Election Committee, as appointed by President Hall, is comprised of Jim Davis-Chairman, Tamara Davis, Milt Franklin, George Smith, and Josh Thornton.

Continue to check your mail, union boards, and our website and facebook pages listed above for forthcoming communications regarding the upcoming Special Election.

CREATION OF RETIREE CAUCUS

The Local has been looking to find a way to do a better job of engaging and keeping up communication with our retirees. In an effort to do so, the Local has created a Retiree Caucus. We have enlisted the help of retired Executive President, Russ Mazzola to chair the Caucus and to develop an agenda for 2019 and going forward. The Retiree Caucus is currently working on creating a contact list of retired members who would like to stay involved and help the Local in various ways. If you or someone you know is interested in being a part of the Retiree Caucus, please email Retirees@G-555.com. The caucus is currently working on being a resource to help retirees with benefit issues and to sponsor financial training hosted by the Local. In addition, we would like to provide an opportunity to just catch-up for coffee at the union office with other retirees on a monthly or bi-monthly basis.

FREE PAYS (BELOW ARE THE DATES OF THE 3 PAYS IN 2019 WITHOUT DEDUCTIONS)

- The pay period of 12/16/2018 – 12/29/2018 was paid on **1/11/2019**
- The pay period of 06/16/2019 – 06/29/2019 will be paid on **7/12/19**
- The pay period of 11/17/2019 – 11/30/2019 will be paid on **12/15/2019**



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2018 GRIEVANCE STATISTICS

In 2018, there have been 36 grievances filed and 2 that were carried over from last year, for a total of 38. The outcomes are as follows:

- Successfully Resolved/Withdrawn – 19
- Grievances Denied by the Company – 6
- Waiting for Answer – 4
- Requested Arbitration - 1
- Pending – 8

2019 ANNUAL DUES INCREASE

Every year the Local receives notice from our National Union, the Utility Workers Union of America, notifying us of the mandatory dues increase as outlined in the National Constitution. That increase is based on the average wage increase gained by all UWUA Locals for the year 2018 of 2.91%. The Base Average Dues of all UWUA Member is \$76.93, therefore the UWUA mandated an increase of \$2.24 per month. As of January 1st, 2019, all Local G-555 Member dues were raised from \$58.22 per month to \$60.46 per month. Even with this increase, our dues remain \$16.46 below the 2018 base average dues of all UWUA Local Unions.



Official Logo of the OHIO UTILITIES TRADE COUNCIL, designed by Executive Treasurer, PAUL TALBOO

OHIO UTILITIES TRADES COUNCIL

LOCAL G-555 & AREA UTILITY UNIONS FORM NEW TRADE COUNCIL

In an effort to build power, politically and otherwise, Local G-555 has joined together with other area utility unions to form a new trade council. Founding member unions include UWUA Local G-555 - who represent the natural gas industry, UWUA Local 270 - who represent the electric power industry, Communications Workers Union of America (CWA) Local 4340 - who represent the tele-data industry, and American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 8 - who represent the water and sewer industry. In the few months that those involved have met, they have taken a concept and have begun to build an organization that all involved hope will help those in the utility industry build power. A set of by-laws have been drafted and ratified, officially creating the Ohio Utilities Trade Council (OUTC). Upon ratification, per the new by-laws, the Council elected Executive Officers. Gary Kundrat, President of CWA Local 4340, was elected President of the OUTC, Paul Talboo, Executive Treasurer of Local G-555, was elected Vice-President of the Council and Greg McCoy, Alternate Executive Board Member of the Cleveland Division of UWUA Local 270, was elected Recording Secretary. The official delegate of AFSCME Council 8, when named, will become an At-Large Member of the Executive Board, as will the delegate of any new member union. A logo (see left) was created by Paul Talboo for the OUTC. Next steps for the Council will be to grow the name recognition of the new labor council, recruiting new members, and building a political action process by which the Council can lobby and endorse Ohio legislators and political candidates who support utility workers and organized labor as a whole.

LOCAL G-555 HAD 47 RETIREMENTS IN 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:	Years of Service:	Retiree Name:	Retirement Date:	Years of Service:	Retiree Name:	Retirement Date:	Years of Service:
Edward C. Budd	01/01/18	44	Robert F. Schneider	05/01/18	24	David J. Kyker	09/01/18	42
Joseph S. Hernandez	01/01/18	44	William D. Webken	05/01/18	23	Nicholas Salvo	09/01/18	27
Carol Y. Hewlett	01/01/18	31	Dale A. Andes	06/01/18	35	John A. Wanda	09/01/18	32
David M. Mattiuz	01/01/18	40	Gregory J. Falatok	06/01/18	36	Patricia Ann Zembyrcki	09/01/18	24
Mary Anne McGinness	01/01/18	26	Kevin J. Kumazec	06/01/18	35	Mark A. Brandt	10/01/18	19
Michael J. Scianna	01/01/18	25	Gene A. Potter	06/01/18	40	John P. Grady	10/01/18	25
John T. Quinn	02/01/18	31	William J. Straka Jr.	06/01/18	25	Randy P. Albright	11/01/18	31
Kenneth J. Sray	02/01/18	39	Arthur A. Wesley	06/01/18	32	Jeffrey A. Chapman	11/01/18	32
Timothy D. Sullivan	02/01/18	27	Gregory L. Williams	06/01/18	24	Geretta J. Davis	11/01/18	43
William J. Twigg	02/01/18	29	Richard S. Baranski	07/01/18	31	Marsha A. Ganaway	11/01/18	30
Margaret E. Bevel-Jeter	03/01/18	38	David D. Moyer	07/01/18	26	Vince E. Hill	11/01/18	39
Kenneth W. Carr	03/01/18	29	Richard A. Paone	07/01/18	32	Carey E. Cook	12/01/18	41
Dean A. Fisher	03/01/18	30	Benjamin F. Tillman	07/01/18	40	Steven A. Horton	12/01/18	25
Paul A. Vorisek	04/01/18	34	Vicki L. Rhiel	08/01/18	13	Madeline E. Phillips	12/01/18	40
William Hommel Jr.	05/01/18	25	William Smith	08/01/18	40	George E. Prosuch Jr.	12/01/18	29
Frederick A. Schmitt	05/01/18	31	Shirley D. Crislip	09/01/18	18			

LOCAL G-555 HAD 41 NEW HIRES IN 2018

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

G-555 SALUTES OUR MEMBERS

BOSTON EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

In response to the dire situation in Massachusetts, in which several miles of pipeline were over-pressurized leading to a number of explosions, fires, injuries, and even deaths, Local G-555 and the Company sent a group of our finest workers to assist in restoring service to the affected communities in the area. Unlike previous Mutual Aid efforts, this was not our typical type of work; Members were mostly doing manifold and house line repair work and inspecting appliances to ensure they were in working condition and safe for the customers. The group spent over a month there, living out of an old cruise ship, working 10 to 14 hours a day, 7 days a week, in all types of weather, and there was not a single injury involving G-555 Members – an incredible accomplishment.

Meanwhile, back home, our Members that did not assist in Massachusetts were busier than ever. Already shorthanded, they did an amazing job during our most hectic time of year, completing roughly 2700 more reconnect orders in the first two weeks of this light-up season than in that same period the previous year, without a single order falling out of compliance – another incredible accomplishment from our Membership.

Whether it's with our everyday work, or if we're hundreds of miles away assisting others, one thing is clear: nobody does it like G-555. We believe we are the best, safest, most knowledgeable Gas Workers in the Nation, and we continue to prove it every chance we get.

We thank our Members and their families for making the sacrifices they selflessly made to help.



LIMA MEMBERS HONOR OUR VETERANS



In honor of Veterans' Day, Clarence Bradley (Engineering Technician – Inspection), with his own money, bought sweatshirts for those in Lima who have served our Country. As you can see in the photo (LEFT), the shirts are embossed with the emblem of the Military Branch that each member proudly served, and they all gathered outside on Veterans' Day and raised the flag together.

The Local G-555 Officers and Members offer our most sincere gratitude to all of our members who have served our great county.

(featured in the photo from left to right: Jim Lyle, Dan Wheeler, Jeff Smith, Clarence Bradley, Jeff Shelly, Tony Wilkerson, Sharon Maenle, Sue Schuman)

AKRON DISTRICT GIVES BACK

The Holiday season often brings so much joy and happiness to people, but not everyone gets to share those same feelings, and our Akron District decided to do something about it. They voted at their October monthly meeting to get together with a local organization to help some less fortunate children in Northeast Ohio have a memorable Christmas. The District then paired up with Heaven's Helping Hands, a volunteer organization that works with local foster and adoption agencies, and received wish lists from 12 children chosen by the organization. At the November monthly meeting, Members donated various toys, electronics, games, and over \$650 in cash and gift cards to help brighten these 12 children's Christmases. With the donations collected, the District was able to give the children everything on each of their individual wish lists and more. Truly a heartwarming story, and we are so proud to call these Brothers and Sisters part of our Union family.

