



International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
District Lodge 66
1307 Market Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Union Herald Article from the desk of:



Neil Kamrowski
Directing Business Representative, IAMAW District Lodge 66

Martinez, Gruber Celebrate 100 Year Anniversary at Peerless Chain

Story from the IAM Imail

IAM International President Bob Martinez and IAM Midwest Territory General Vice President Philip J. Gruber recently joined IAM District 66 and Local 1030 members, retirees and company executives in celebrating the 100-year anniversary of North America's largest chain-maker, Peerless Industrial Group of Winona, MN.

Peerless is home to more than 160 IAM members and has enjoyed a more than 50-year labor-management partnership with the Machinists Union.



“It’s an honor to be here today,” said Martinez, who was invited to speak at the special event, along with several other special guests. “I’m glad to be celebrating this achievement alongside Midwest Territory General Vice President Phil Gruber and my Brothers

and Sisters at IAM District 66 and Local 1030.”

“There’s a saying I’m sure you all are familiar with,” continued Martinez, “‘A chain is only as strong as its weakest link.’ You all are a chain of strength. That strength is thanks in large part to the cooperation between Peerless and the Machinists Union. Sure, we’ve had our disagreements along the way. Any relationship does. But we sit down together—with mutual respect—and we work them out. That cooperation has been beneficial for everyone. We’ve worked

together to make Peerless the largest chain producer in North America and the third largest in the world. That’s a point of pride for our union. Thank you for allowing generations of Machinists to have a better life and look forward to the next build such great products. I 100 years.”



Peerless the largest chain America and the third largest point of pride for our union. generations of Machinists to build such great products. I 100 years.”

Upon his closing remarks, Martinez presented Peerless President George Kosidowski with an award commemorating the company’s 100 years. The International President also joined General Vice President Gruber, IAM District 66 Directing Business Representative Neil Kamrowski, who also worked at Peerless, IAM Local 1030 President Del Denzer and IAM Local 1030 Vice President Jana Kirch on a tour of the 350,000-foot facility.

The Winona-based chain manufacturing company was founded in 1917 by three brothers who began making chains in the back room of a butcher shop. Today, IAM-represented members at Peerless make chains for everything from simple tire chains, fire hydrants, U-Haul trailers, handcuffs and swingsets to those used on large-scale tuna fishing boats, aircraft carriers, transport planes and helicopter slings.

Peerless' chains were also used in some of the most high-profile world events in U.S. history.



“When a BP oil rig leaked over 130 million of gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico in 2010 – the largest oil spill in history – it was Local 1030 members at Peerless who helped build the more than one million feet of chain needed to weigh down oil booms during the clean-up,” says Gruber. “IAM

members put in more than three weeks of overtime to help in that effort. When the statue of Saddam Hussein came toppling down in the center of Baghdad in 2003, it was Peerless chain, created by our members, used to pull that statue down. IAM Local 1030 members are heroes in their own right. And so is Peerless – a company with small town roots that makes a good, quality product right here in the United States. Together, labor and management have created a 100-year product that Americans can be proud of.”

“My father (recently retired) and my uncle have worked at Peerless since before I was born,” said Kamrowski. “I was very proud to have had the opportunity to work 16 years out of Peerless’ 100-year history. Sixteen years is a small drop in

the bucket compared to members who have worked there for as many as 50 years. Both our members and management personnel at Peerless all take great pride in what they do every day. Congratulations to Peerless and IAM Local 1030 members on your 100-year accomplishment.”

The above article is copied from the IAM regular news source known as Imail.

This can be delivered to your inbox of your email by registering for Imail at



www.goiam.org and clicking on the “Subscribe to Imail” button on the top right of the home page.

It was an honor to have IP Martinez and GVP Gruber in our District to participate in this historic event!

Legislative Conference 2017

From May 7 through May 11, 2017 I attended the Legislative Conference in Washington DC. I was sent on behalf of the Wisconsin State Council of Machinists. Along with many members from all over the IAM, we spent the second week of May listening to several speakers and talking to our Legislators or their staff on issues that matter to the IAM. Along with DBR John Steigoff from District Lodge 77, and DBR Alex Hoekstra and several members from District Lodge 10 we visited the offices of Senators Franken, Baldwin, and Johnson. We also visited Representatives Pocan, Kind, Grothman, and Moore. Depending on whom we were speaking to, we talked about a lot of issues.

1. HR 904 - Omnibus Buy American Improvement Act of 2017

Support - This bill would strengthen and simplify federal procurement policies, increase transparency, and strengthen the definition of a “manufactured good” as it applies to Buy American requirements

2. Keep our Pension Promises Act (KOPPA)

Support - This bill restores ERISA’s “anti-cutback rule” so that once you retire, your pension will not be cut.

3. HR 785 / S 545 - National “Right to Work”

Oppose – The fact that Wisconsin and Iowa are RTW states is bad enough. Creating laws to make freeloading a nationwide thing is anti-union, and bad for the average American.

4. American Health Care Act (AHCA)

Oppose – I have written about this disastrous bill in great length. It DID pass the house. Now the Senate is drafting their own version of this bill. Obamacare is not perfect, but this bill is a disaster.

5. HR 173 – Repeal the “Cadillac Tax”

Support - One of the things included in Obamacare that the IAM opposes is the Cadillac Tax. This bill removes this unnecessary tax.

6. HR 1364 Official Time reform Act of 2017

Oppose – This bill, introduced by House Republicans takes away time for federal workers who are in a union to have time on the clock with their union representative. From the Union’s perspective, they are mandated to represent all federal workers, but aren’t allowed the time to do it. Yet one more bill where the GOP is attacking Unions.

7. S 908 – Make It Here Act

Support - This bill would prevent the use of a “public interest waiver” if a foreign contract would decrease US employment. It would also toughen the guidelines for when waivers could be used to develop uniform transparency standards for federal agencies that would require the public disclosure of the amount of tax dollars going to foreign businesses.

8. EX-IM Bank

While funding is now allowed for the Export-Import Bank to function, the board is not staffed to the point where they have a quorum. Without a quorum, the board cannot function. This gives foreign competitors a huge advantage when it comes to trade.

9. Full funding of F-35, F-18, F-22, and NASA

Support - These projects are built and maintained by our IAM members. Fully funding these projects ensures that our members have jobs to go to.

District Lodge 66



The District Delegates gathered for our regular monthly meeting on Monday, 2017. Along with the regular business of the Lodge, the Delegates made motions and passed the expenditure to send \$1000.00 to the Wisconsin State Council of Machinists supporting the WIARA. A motion was also made to approve lost time for Rod Perry to attend a Web Developing and Design training session here at the District Lodge to redesign, and update our District

Lodge 66 webpage. Thank you cards were received from Ben Rice and Lakhia McCallison (Pictured with her Family) for the scholarship Awards they received from the District Lodge and the IAM.

Negotiations also took place with Bearing Sea Environmental. The negotiations are not complete yet. Their CBA expires on August 31st, 2017.

I want to take this opportunity to remind our readers with July 4th just over the horizon to remember to buy made in the USA when you are making your purchases for the festivities.

Until next month...