



International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
District Lodge 66
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Union Herald Article from the desk of:



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It is officially AUTUMN! I love the season, with its warm days and crisp nights, the beautiful array of colors splashed against the bluffs that overlook the rivers and streams of our valleys, and HALLOWEEN-my personal favorite holiday. I love visiting apple orchards and pumpkin patches, enjoying the activities provided by many-hayrides, corn mazes, feeding the animals, and of course-searching for the perfect pumpkin to transform into the perfect jack-o-lantern! For those of you who enjoy sports-football season is here, and with it-many events for fans to get together and cheer for their teams. The craft fair season is also upon us-never too early to find knickknacks and trinkets for Halloween, Christmas, and everything else imaginable-oh happy days! Shopping and junk food paradises. Whatever it is, that you enjoy about the season-I hope you get out there and find your happy places!

It has been six months since I began my journey as Directing Business Representative, here at District 66, and I drive from Winona, MN to the Lacrosse office each day-so I have appreciated the changing of the seasons more so than in the past. We are truly blessed to live in such a beautiful area! I cannot believe how many years that I have taken it for granted. The drive also allows for reflection-of the day, days long past, and future plans. I must admit, in these first six months-there have been some "WHAT did I get myself into?!" moments-but I have also had the privilege to learn from each of the Local Lodge representatives, and the support and mentorship of our Grand Lodge.

Someone once told me that I thrive in chaos-I'm beginning to believe it. I love what I do, don't misunderstand- being a representative in your home shop is one thing, but this position has opened my eyes to a much, much larger picture, than I could have ever imagined. I have a renewed appreciation for the work, and for the people who work tirelessly to further the goals of our organization for our members and their families. I have heard the negative commentary-the union doesn't do anything for me or questioning what the union does for THEM, personally. My first question, in return-would be, who, exactly-do you think "the union" is? The Officers and Stewards are dues paying members, same as everyone else. The **only** difference is that they have volunteered to run for the positions that service the other members. They take the positions, knowing that they will get abused from both sides, at times-not just the Company, but our own brothers and sisters as well. My second question, would be-what have you personally done, to further our strength as an organization? I do not ask to be rude, or to throw shade-but because I believe that many, take the work done by few-for granted. Just like the view as I drive-we see it every day, and do not really recognize how fortunate we are, to be a part of our union. My challenge for each of our members, is to give a few moments to reflect on what we, ourselves can, or are willing to do for our union. I'm not talking diving right into the deep end-but every little bit helps. I understand that different people have different strengths, and that not everyone is interested in politics, or enjoys speaking in front of a group-but there are so many ways to support your Executive Board and Stewards-especially prior to negotiations or grievances. Start small, choose a day for everyone to wear their union attire-or wear buttons. For those of you who feel that there is more to be done-come to the meetings, share your ideas for improving, volunteer your services to help. Not only is there strength in numbers, but also FRESH PERSPECTIVES, which is essential for growth and evolution. The most simplistic way to show support-**thank them**. Tell them that you appreciate their efforts and time spent representing-it will be welcomed, and for some-energizes them to do more. I would like to personally thank each and every one of my Local Lodge Officers, Stewards, and Committee members for all the work they put into making the IAMAW a strong, inclusive union-that fights for workers and their families every single day. Thank you to the District Lodge 66 delegates, Executive Board, and Carla Easterday for your support and experience-you are all awesome!

I have had several classes, to educate me for the representational duties that come with being a Business Representative, but nothing compares to real life experience-so far I have had several arbitrations, three contract negotiations-two of them Service Contracts, which I had zero experience with, and many other new situations to navigate through. At times, it is overwhelming-but always challenges me to push myself farther than I think I'm capable of going. With each victory, each satisfied member-the rewards stack. Even the losses provide learning opportunities, which will serve me well for future endeavors. District 66 was chosen by the Midwest Territory to participate in the LEADS program-which is designed to help focus on Women in Leadership roles within the IAMAW. Andrea Jaskola-Local Lodge 1030, Theresa Opitz-Local Lodge 2191, and myself, travelled to the Harbor as part of a group to identify, and give ideas on how to tackle issues that limit the abilities of our sisters to ascend to the leadership roles. It was comprised of Business and Grand Lodge Reps, and Sisters in various positions within our union structure, to strategize a program to be taught at the Harbor, or in the field-our

group thought that both, would be beneficial. There will be more information forthcoming on this new, and important educational opportunity. Equality within our union structure is important, and women bring many talents to our organization-so go get it, ladies! You are important and worthy!

We wrapped up negotiations with Peerless Chain Company, in Winona, MN on September 10, 2021, after heading back to the table when the members voted to not accept the first proposal. After discussions with the Company-an extension was signed to continue talks, and an acceptable offer was given. The members of Local Lodge 1030 ratified a four- year contract on September 17, 2021, with substantial increases in many areas, including wages, shift differential, training and cross-training pay. The vacation cap at 4 weeks, was moved to 5 weeks, and new employees were given one week of vacation to start, with another week of unpaid leave. The negotiating committee did an outstanding job, and I am very proud of what they accomplished for the members. I am also extremely proud of the relationship between the Company and the Union-the current management and Union leadership have made amazing efforts to build a productive relationship, with both sides equal. I truly believe that it is for this reason, that Peerless and the IAMAW continue to have success. Congratulations to all!

On a more somber note, our brothers and sisters working at Fort McCoy, have been tasked with keeping up with day to day operations, and the influx of the Afghanistan refugees living there-which is sometimes stressful, as their culture is so much different than we are accustomed to. There have been several disturbing incidents witnessed, including two which are currently moving through the judicial system. Nonetheless, they carry on, and do their best to keep the base running smoothly. Thank you, all of you-for all of your hard work and patience throughout this hectic, uncertain time-you are appreciated!

October will be spent preparing for another arbitration, travelling to Illinois for a Midwest Territory meeting on October 26, then to Vadnais Heights for the MN State Council of Machinists Conference, on October 29, 30, and 31. I will also be negotiating with Marco Federal, at Fort McCoy-who have an extension on the existing CBA, until October 29, 2021.

As many people have called with questions regarding the Federal Government's new Covid mandates, I felt that I should make mention of a few things. First, mask requirements-which many of District 66's members have been required to wear at their respective facilities-should be treated the same as a PPE. Second, the vaccination mandate-unless you work at a Federal Enclave, should be negotiated as a working condition. This is an evolving issue, that most likely will see many exclusions and/or modifications as time passes. The most important thing is to keep the lines of communication open-not only with the Management teams, but with members. No matter what your personal feelings are with regards to vaccinations-please respect other's opinions-everyone handles their personal health and safety in different ways.

As always, I like to include history facts, as I am always fascinated by our evolution,-not only as humans, but our societal norms, political climate, and technological advancements.

October is when we celebrate Halloween, derived from All Hallow's Eve, or All Saint's Eve. Some believe that our traditions were influenced by the Celtic festival of Samhain, marking the end of harvest season-and the beginning of winter, the "darker half of the

year”. It was seen as a liminal time, when the boundary between this world and the Otherworld thinned. At this time, the *Aos Si*; “spirits or fairies”, were more active and could more easily move between the worlds. In many cultures, the dead were celebrated, and offerings were given to ensure that people and livestock survived the winter. Bonfires and dressing up in costumes and scary masks were meant to scare off the bad spirits.

On October 3, 1863-President Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation designating the last Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day.

On October 8, 1871-The Great Fire of Chicago erupted. Legend says that it started when Mrs. O’Leary’s cow kicked over a lantern. Over 300 people were killed, and 90.000 were left homeless, as the fire levelled 3.5 square miles. Financial loss was estimated at over \$200 million dollars.

October 24, 1945-The United Nations was founded.

Eleanor Roosevelt was born on October 11, 1884, in New York City. She was the wife of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the 32nd U.S. President-and had been called “First Lady of the World” as she lived an unprecedented, independent life-travelling extensively on her own to improve the lives of people all over the world. She was the first wife of a President to give her own press conference, worked as a U.S. delegate to the United Nations for many years-and helped write the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The National Prohibition Act, or” Volstead Act” was passed by Congress on October 28, 1919. It lasted for fourteen years and became highly profitable for organized crime.

In closing, I would like to remind all, regardless of all the negative comments about Joe Biden-he is the one pushing UNIONS, and the PRO ACT. He is the first U.S. President to speak openly about the benefits of Unions, in a long, long time-and for that, the man deserves some kudos. Until next time, take care!

In Solidarity,

Jana M. Kirch