



International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers District Lodge 66

May 2024

Recently, I attended the International Staff Conference, in Washington, DC. I believe that I earlier referred to it as the “National” Staff Conference, so my apologies for any confusion. The International Staff Conference was held in conjunction with former International President Robert Martinez’s Retirement celebration. It was fantastic seeing everyone in the same space and sharing stories of battles and celebrations. It is hard for many of our members to comprehend the scope of talented, smart people that fight on behalf of the membership every day. They only see a very small piece of the entire movement, most likely nothing beyond their own Local Lodge, but to see everyone gathered, one truly understands the magnitude of our organization. We are a small part of a huge machine that strives to ensure that everyone gets a chance to *live*, not just survive. With each attendance at a conference, convention, or Staff meeting, I am reminded of how dedicated these people are, to fight on behalf of the members, and how open they are about sharing their knowledge and passion. I have yet to experience anything other than inclusion and the sense that I am surrounded by people who have my back, no matter what.

We heard from a variety of speakers, including Former U.S. Secretary of Labor, Robert Reich. For those who have not heard this man speak, he is AMAZING!! He spoke about the upcoming Presidential election, and gave facts about the two administrations, regarding issues that affect working people. His message was clear; there is only ONE candidate who has unwaveringly supported workers and Unions. Since I am not a multi-millionaire, the other candidate will do absolutely nothing for me, or my best interests. Educating members will be paramount in this election. We need to constantly remind people to do their research on issues, make sure you KNOW how your representatives voted on issues. Be clear about what is really at stake. I am not one to shy away from a political matter, but I know that some of the members are not comfortable having these discussions, because it may get heated. My advice? Use your voice. Never give up your power because someone else may not agree with you. If we do not



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discuss and debate things, if we are afraid of failure or ostracization, then we will never make positive changes or grow as a Country.

I thoroughly enjoyed Mr. Reich's presentation and am hoping that they can confirm him as a speaker at the Grand Lodge Convention, in September.



Honoring former International President Robert Martinez at his retirement dinner was bittersweet, while we are glad that he will be able to enjoy retirement, his leadership and compassion will be missed. He was a huge supporter of mentorship and inclusion for everyone, and greeted everyone with the same warmth, from members to Grand Lodge Representatives, to peers on the Executive Board. He greeted you like a family member. He was always fighting for the membership, fighting for their families, with the sole intent of ensuring that working people got a seat at the table. We will never forget you, Bob, or your contributions to our organization. Happy Retirement!!



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The Midwest State Council of Machinists will meet in Missouri, later this month. It will be “all hands on deck” this political season, so getting everyone educated about what is really at stake, and motivating them to go take action, has been the focus of all of these conferences and conventions.

With the close of the IMAAW Grand Lodge Convention, in September, we WILL be seeking volunteers from the Local Lodges, to assist with getting the word out, so please consider giving a few hours of your time to help get Joe Biden re-elected. He has done more Unions and workers than any other US President in history, which impacts all of us, directly.

In closing, I can report that the District Lodge has found two spaces that will meet our needs, and pending discussion and approval from the delegates, we will be moving into our new space. Again, I will give updates as they occur.

Fraternally

Jana M. Kirch