2011 Legislative Session Ends
By Shirley Dickes

What a session it has been in Hartford! A budget is passed and many new laws are in place. What bothers me most is the budget. While Governor Dannel Malloy is happy he has a budget in place to close the $3.5 billion dollar budget, many of us know the hard part is just beginning. The budget, as passed, is contingent on concessions from unionized state workers. State workers will have to accept $1.6 billion dollars in concessions negotiated through their unions. Union workers will be voting on the deal over the next two weeks. Union workers are under threat of massive layoffs if they do not accept the concessions. In today’s current employment climate, this is a major issue. Either accept the concessions or face the threat of being laid off.

Paid sick leave was passed but it is so watered down, it leaves a bitter taste in some mouths. In listening to the debate on CT-N, I was totally amazed at some of the comments made by our legislators! Some of the questions focused on, how did you arrive at the figure of only fifty or more employees? Why is it just service workers? Why does it not include manufacturing workers? This went on and on!

Being caught with small amounts of marijuana is now a fine as long as it is a first time offense and you are over the age of twenty-one. Money will be set aside to revamp the UCONN Medical Center in Farmington. In-state tuition for undocumented immigrants passed, along with the transgender bill.

I am sad to report the captive audience bill was never brought forward. This bill would have allowed employees the right to not attend company meetings if they were about politics, religion or union organizing. To those of us who have participated in organizing drives, this was a huge loss for us. When we talk to employees of a non-union company who want to have better working rights, more safety rules or hourly wages and holiday pay, they are so frightened their company will find out and fire them. They tell tales of being made to sit through meeting after meeting whereby the company attacks unions. This bill would have allowed employees to leave meetings without fear of being terminated if they do. Some politicians looked at the bill as being unconstitutional. Businesses lobbied it would seriously curtail their rights to hold meetings with their employees. I was saddened we could not change anyone’s thinking about the constitutionality of the bill. I have to congratulate Sister Lori Pelletier who worked so tirelessly and fought so hard to make this bill a reality. She never gave up right to the bitter end.

Connecticut needs to put an emphasis on attracting businesses to our state. Jobs need to be created if we are to move forward and grow our economy. Governor Malloy has called for a special session in the fall to focus on jobs so stay tuned!

I am always amazed at the thinking of businesses and our elected politicians. Makes me wonder why we elect the same ones over and over again.

So here we sit with taxes going up on July 1st. Many of the middle class will feel this in our wallets. Let’s hope our legislators have made the right decisions. I, for one, will be paying close attention to the progress we make on the new budget and laws our representatives have set for us. I am worried too, I will admit. I know we live in a state where it is very expensive to live and retire. But I do know I would not want to live anywhere else.
Rock Cats Baseball Celebrates Union Night

The Community Services Committee

It’s that time of year where many focus their attention on their favorite baseball teams. It does not matter if you are a Yankee fan, a Red Sox fan or a Mets fan; it is the game we love most. Many look forward to the first swing of the bat, that first pitch in April.

With that in mind, Local 700 has once again obtained baseball tickets for the 3rd annual “Organized Labor Recognition Night” at the New Britain Rock Cats Stadium. The Rock Cats would like to celebrate the history and contributions union workers have made.

There is also a celebration of the “Helmets to Hardhats” program. This program connects our veterans, many returning from the Middle East, and trains them for jobs within the construction industry.

If you bring a donation of household or toiletry items for the United Labor Agency collection, you will receive a pair of complimentary Rock Cats tickets for any home game in 2011!

The game is scheduled for June 25th; game time is 6:35 P.M. Gates will open at 5:05 P.M. Tickets can be picked up at the Union Hall, 82 Saybrook Road, Higganum. The Union Hall is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M. Each member will be allowed four tickets on a first come, first serve basis. Please call 860-345-2098 to have your tickets set aside for you.

This event is a great time and we look forward to seeing everyone at the Stadium!
Remembering Rudy
By Bill Shortell

My most vivid memory of Rudy Buck is from a late-night meeting in December, 1985 in the basement stewards’ room of IAM Local 1746 in East Hartford.

Three P&W locals were out on strike, for the first time since the disaster of 1960. The strike had received a blow that day when 40% of the members from the East Hartford local, voting for a second time, had voted ‘no’ and blocked their local from joining the rest of us.

As a group from all the locals and the staff from District 91 hunched around the big table, plotting our next move, Rudy stood next to a filing cabinet, with the top drawer pulled out, leaning on it for support, exhausted, ashamed, bitter, still leading.

He was the President of Local 1746. He and a large group of activists, obsessed with turning around labor relations in their monster plant, had poured their whole souls into trying, one more time to drag their confused, scared, divided membership out to the picket line.

Rudy went on to be Assistant Directing Labor Rep for many years, and was the architect of Article VIII, our seniority clause. We went from having the least seniority rights to the most, under his leadership. His Local redeemed itself and defied the company in 2001 with the rest of us.

Rudy was a tough, gruff, hard-hitting trade unionist, typical of the leaders of his day. Smarter than most of us, he earned the respect of management as well as the membership. His life was bruised and battered by the challenges facing metal workers and our unions in this country: massive layoffs, bitter factional fights, left-right splits.

His life took a sharp turn for the better when he hooked up with Shop Steward Diane Sperry, and became a beloved member of her family. Rudy had his personal demons, which he overcame with the help of Diane.

The edifice we built in those days will never be dismantled, even as the company relentlessly tears up our bargaining units to find workers who do not yet have our rights. They will eventually get them, like we did, the hard way, following leaders like Rudy, who blazed a trail mapped in our Collective Bargaining Agreement that will survive us all.

Rudolph “Rudy” C. Buck passed away suddenly on May 22, 2011.
Juneteenth Day

By Shirley Dickes

We all know the usual happenings in the month of June such as Safety Month, Flag Day, graduations, weddings, the start of summer, and Father’s Day. But June is so much more. In researching the month, I was amazed at all of the events of June.

But one item really stuck out for me. We also should celebrate Juneteenth Day. Now everyone would wonder what it is. It is a very important day for us. Juneteenth Day is really June 19th and it’s more widely known as Emancipation Day, Freedom Day. It is the oldest African-American observance in the United States. It celebrates freedom from slavery.

On June 19, 1865, General Gordon Granger with his federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas on a mission to force slave owners to release their slaves. We all know the end of slavery was in 1863, word of this did not reach the southern states until two years later.

In reading about this, many would wonder why it took so long to reach those states. While theories are abundant as to the why, most feel the news was purposely withheld so the wealthy landowners could have their slaves bring in one last crop.

Although originally only celebrated in Texas and Louisiana, the celebration went to Arkansas and other states as free Blacks migrated across the country. Family picnic celebrations are held in observance of Juneteenth Day.

Some states celebrate Emancipation Day at different times of different months, but the most common celebration is still June 19th. Almost all events include singing and dancing to symbolize the celebrations that took place years ago on New Year’s Eve in 1862, when blacks waited for President Abraham Lincoln’s official announcement that the slaves, of the eleven southern states that seceded from the Union, were free.

Trade Pact Review

By IAM

In addition to the renegotiation of NAFTA and similar trade deals, the IAM demands the end of pending agreements with Korea, Panama and Colombia. “With the U.S. auto industry on life support, the last thing Congress should do is approve an unbalanced trade agreement that makes it easier for Korea to export Korean-made vehicles to the U.S., but doesn’t make it easier for the U.S. to export U.S.-made vehicles to Korea,” asserts IAM International President R. Thomas Buffenbarger.

“Panama remains an offshore tax haven for U.S. and foreign corporations. And no trade agreement should be considered with Colombia until the Colombian government adequately addresses atrocious labor and human rights violations and effectively enforces labor laws that comply with ILO conventions.” declared Buffenbarger.

In terms of China’s currency manipulation, experts say the preferred solution is a negotiated realignment of exchange rates that begins to smoothly unwind the existing trade imbalance. If the political will to initiate such negotiations does not exist, the IAM supports the Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act of 2007 (HR 2942) and the Fair Currency Act of 2007 (S 796), which would empower the International Trade Commission (ITC) to impose countervailing duties in the case of currency manipulation. The economic Policy Institute estimates NAFTA has displaced 682,900 U.S. workers since its inception, three-fifths of those displaced jobs (415,000) were in the manufacturing
Who Has Your Back

By Valerie Stewart

On Wednesday June 8th Connecticut’s legislative session ended at midnight. I sat in the Senate gallery and listened to the debate or filibuster on FMLA for Para professionals. This bill was brought out by American Federation of Teachers (AFT). The bill had passed in the House and was set to pass in the Senate. What the bill would have done is change the hour criteria to qualify for FMLA to cover Para Professionals who are only allowed to work 5.25 or 6.50 hours per day due to town budget restraints. Therefore they do not qualify for federal guidelines for FMLA. The bill was pretty straight forward; cover the people who through no fault of their own don’t qualify, end of story.

This is where I was flabbergasted by the rhetoric of the 32nd district Senator Robert Kane of Water town. He started out by saying that his wife who works forty, fifty hours per week had used FMLA when they adopted their child. So, one would think that he would understand the importance of FMLA. Senator Prague was the person in charge of the discussion on this bill. Senator Kane decided that he didn’t want this bill to pass because the majority party had a good amount of bills pass already and he was determined to play politics on the backs of workers. So he did what he does best and talked the bill to death, asking such important questions like… Where did the federal committee come up with the hourly criteria? What formula did they use? Who brought out this bill? Was it a union? What union? His aid worked feverously on handing him questions that would take up time and stall the vote. His own party asked him to stop. The worst part of this whole story is the way Senator Kane smiled gleefully at the person who was trying to get these rights for the workers, so proud of what he had accomplished.

So if you are disgusted by his actions as I am please contact Senator Kane and tell him to do his job and quit stomping on workers. Home: 203-217-1333, Office: 860-240-0381or E-Mail him at Rob.Kane@cga.ct.gov.

Community Services Committee

Works with Pratt

United Way Diaper Drive

By the Community Services Committee

Middlesex County United Way recently successfully became a Service Area of the Diaper Bank for the county. While they receive a total of 120,000 disposable diapers a year, it is not nearly enough to donate to those families in need of the service.

United Way has to depend on donations of either money or diaper donations. There are roughly 3,000 babies in need in the county. The Diaper Bank is only able to help about 200 families. United Way looks to the community to help.

About a year ago, we worked with the company and held a very successful drive. Once again we are asking for your help.

Your Local Lodge together with Pratt & Whitney is holding a diaper drive to help with this need. A large box is located outside the cafeteria building. We will be collecting until Monday, June 20th. At that time all donations will be delivered to a collection area. Middletown Elks Lodge has offered to be a drop-off point.

Also, June 21st is a “Day of Caring” where volunteers will be outside of Middlesex County Stop and Shop stores collecting diapers from shoppers. We hope you will consider making donation either at work or at your local Stop and Shop. Thank you for making this year’s drive a successful one.
How Times Have Changed
1943 Guide to Hiring Women

In the July 1943 issue of Transportation Magazine, guidelines were written for male supervisors of women in the workforce during World War II. We are not sure which one offends us more as they are all so bad! Pick young women. They usually have more of a sense of responsibility than their unmarried sisters, they’re less likely to be flirtatious, they need the work or they wouldn’t be doing it.

1. When you have to use older women, try to get ones who have worked outside the home at some time in their lives. Older women who have never contacted the public have a hard time adapting themselves and are inclined to be cantankerous and fussy.
2. General experience indicates that “husky” girls – those who are just a little on the heavy side – are more even tempered and efficient than their underweight sisters,
3. Retain a physician to give each woman you hire a special physical examination – one covering female conditions. This step not only protects the property against the possibilities of lawsuit, but reveals whether the employee-to-be has any female weaknesses which would make her mentally or physically unfit for the job.
4. Stress at the outset the importance of time the fact that a minute or two lost here and there makes serious inroads on schedules.
5. Give the female employee a definite day-long schedule of duties so that they’ll keep busy without bothering the management for instructions every few minutes.
6. Whenever possible, let the inside employee change from one job to another at some time during the day. Women are inclined to be less nervous and happier with change.
7. Give every girl an adequate number of rest periods during the day. You have to make some allowances for feminine psychology. A girl has more confidence and is more efficient if she can keep her hair tidied, apply fresh lipstick and wash her hands several times a day.
8. Be tactful when issuing instructions or in making criticisms. Women are often sensitive; they cannot shrug off harsh words the way men do. Never ridicule a woman – it breaks her spirit and cuts off her efficiency.
9. Be reasonably considerate about using strong language around women.
10. Get enough size variety in operator’s uniforms so that each girl can have a proper fit. This point can’t be stressed too much in keeping women happy.

Thank goodness we were not around to hear and see this. Most of us would have been up in arms. We definitely realize we have a tremendous appreciation of the saying, “You’ve come a long way, baby!”
Wisconsin Union Workers
Not Out of the Woods Yet

By Shirley Dickey

With a push by republican lawmakers in Wisconsin, a request was made to the Wisconsin Supreme Court to overturn a lower court order blocking the states’ union rights law. It appears the republican lawmakers feel this hold-up will jeopardize Governor Scott Walker’s budget plan. With a deficit of nearly $3.6 billion, they are worried there will be new financial problems for their July 1st budget.

Republicans say they need this new law, which strips all public workers of nearly all their collective bargaining rights and pushes workers into paying more for the health care and pensions, so local communities will not have to face deep cuts in state aid. The republicans can add collective bargaining restrictions into the budget bill but are fearful of another uprising from demonstrators.

Republicans are hoping to bypass lower appeals courts and have the Supreme Court to step in to overturn a ruling from Dane County Circuit Court Judge Maryann Sumi who declared the law void.

Arguments have been heard stating the judge has no authority to “insert herself in the legislative process and block a law from taking effect” Two Supreme Court judges, both liberals, hammered away at the Deputy Attorney General Kevin St. John.

All of this surrounds the ruling by Judge Sumi that Republican lawmakers violated Wisconsin’s open meeting law by “failing to give proper public notice of the special committee’s meeting. Republicans had convened a special committee to take the fiscal elements from the proposal, thus allowing it to pass with fewer senators present.

Democrats are awaiting the Court’s decision. The court can either accept the case or rule on its merits. Other states, who are trying to follow suit in gutting collective bargaining rights of state and municipal workers, appear to have taken a back burner for the time being. I will keep you informed once we hear how this goes.

We have witnessed in our own state the beating state workers are taking here. They will be voting soon to determine if they will accept or reject the concessions.

Attacks On
Working Families

From IAM

In a continuation of the coordinated attack on working families and their right to bargain collectively, Sen. Jim DeMint (R-SC), along with seven other GOP members of the U.S. Senate, introduced national “right-to-work” legislation. Original co-sponsors include Senators Tom Coburn (R-OK), Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Mike Lee (R-UT), Rand Paul (R-KY), James Risch (R-ID), Pat Toomey (R-PA) and David Vitter (R-LA).

Supporters of the National Right-to-Work Act say the bill aims to “reduce workplace discrimination by protecting the free choice of individuals to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.”

“The recent move by federal legislators to strip working families of their right to bargain for better wages, benefits and retirement is the latest attempt on the GOP’s long list of tricks to aid the ‘haves’ and disable the ‘have-nots,’” said IAM International President Tom Buffenbarger. “From Wisconsin to Indiana, and from Ohio to Washington, DC, we will fight for our jobs, our families, our commu-
June, Report
82 Saybrook Road Higganum, CT. 06441

Workers Compensation: In the March Compass, Steve Merrick had a letter from the Chairman of the Connecticut Workers Compensation Commission, John Mastropietro. This letter was concerning the use of the Chartis form, Authorization For Use or Disclosure of Medical Information. Do not use the form that Chartis has sent you in the mail. Please use the form that is authorized by Connecticut Workers Compensation Commission. Link provided: http://wcc.state.ct.us/download/acrobat/HIPAARel.pdf

Why do I need to use the correct form? In the letter from John Mastropietro it stated the form has several discrepancies and lacks some items that they require and imposes items for which there is no support. The form fails to provide the provision on the body part and the duration the form will be used. Finally the form release Chartis from Liability.

If you have a work connected injury, contact the Local Lodge and speak to Mike Stone, District 26 Business Representative, who will advise you on what forms need to be filled out. Local Lodge 700 phone number is 860-345-2098.

Injury escort procedure. The company has a procedure in which your supervision or someone else can escort you to medical if you are injured.

Is this a good or bad thing? It is a good thing for one reason. If your condition worsens, someone is with you. If you are in an isolated area and you could not be found for several minutes to hours, someone can explain where you were found. Once you are escorted to medical, the outside clinic or even the emergency room, the person with you can not be in or come into the examining room without your expressed permission. This is a violation of your HIPPA rights.

Why? In the last few recent months, we have had several incidents where supervision has been in the examining room with the employee while discussing the injury. If you are escorted to any medical treatment facility, politely tell the nurse that this person is not authorized to be in the room with you.

Construction notice: In the next few weeks and months CSMC is going to have restructuring of the shop floor. This first large project is going to be for the G&L Pits BT #’s 540995 & 540996. These two machines are going to be cleaned, dismantled and removed from the site and finally the two pits demolished and filled in.

During this time there will be a disruption in the work area and several hazards may be present. If you see or hear of any EH&S issues, contact a Union Safety Rep immediately to review the issue with you.

Noise in the shop! For the past several years CSMC has worked to get employees out of the hearing conservation program. Why? Because far too many people have had loss of hearing because of the loud noises.

Now engineering is changing operations, playing around with the speeds and feeds. What does this do? In some cases nothing. In most cases there are changes that affect your health and safety. We have had a rash of cases recently concerning HIGH NOISE (NEAR HITS).

If an engineer comes over to your machine and makes changes, ask him if he/she have put in a DPR (EMOC). A change in process requires a EMOC (EH&S Management of Change). Losing your hearing because of production or lack of caring by management is not acceptable. It isn’t part of your job to lose your hearing and it’s the company’s responsibility to keep you safe.

If you have to talk loud in the shop, please submit a near hit or contact a Union Safety Rep.

Cancer Study Phase 3 Report has been postponed until first quarter of 2012 per Gary M. Marsh, Ph.D

There currently is a MASS safety complaint on the new blue boxes released to the shop floor in CSMC. Members have numerous issues concerning these boxes. Stay tuned!!!!!!!!!!

We need your help on the VEHS teams. Please join these teams to help make your workplace a safer place to be and have a say in your safety.

Labor quote: "Then join in hand brave Americans all, By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall." John Dickinson, From The Liberty Song

To view the full Monthly EHS report, go to iam700.org click on Safety Representative then Monthly Report.

Respectively submitted Chief Union Safety Representative Paul Dikes

Labor History 1991: Injured worker compensation benefits are reduced by Connecticut and other legislatures. Additional cuts are made in 1993