



The News

Volume 8, Issue 2

July 2007



FOR US, BY US, AND ABOUT US

ATU Local 689 Newsletter

miles to go before we sleep.....rebuilding the confidence

Some days the saying that we all need to just relax and smell the coffee is all I need to remind myself that life goes to fast and we forget to stop just to think about what we are missing by rushing through life daily. The summer is almost over the kids are going back to school and the next holiday is Labor Day and I can ask where did the summer go? Allow me to use this newsletter to bring you up to speed on a couple of events, issues, and concerns.

Local 689 had their first **Benefits Seminar** on June 9th. The entire day was filled with seminars on retirement, health benefits, Worker Compensation, Long Term Disability, important information on buying a house for the first time, NGP offering additional insurance, AFLAC, just to name a few. Our purpose for kicking off this type of seminar is because a great deal of members ask questions and needed information about pension benefits and other benefits they receive constantly. Most importantly, were the number of members who have inquired about changing their pension selection after the fact was alarming and it led us to believe that the information needed to get out so members can make an educated decision. The information given at the seminar was invaluable for all who attended. The next seminar will be held in December or January and I hope to see you there. Oh, by the way, changing is irrevocable once you've received

your first check.

The Annual **Six Flags Family Fun Day** was a hit on July 14th. We sold 3200 tickets and ate lunch with 3200 members and their family. The weather was beautiful and hot. We all had a grand time.

The **Metro Retirees North Carolina Chapter** held their 2nd annual weekend adult reunion social affair in Rocky Mount, NC on the 20th and 21st of July. The President of that chapter, Joel Chappell, and the other officers gave us two full days of southern hospitality and it was truly a pleasure to fellowship with co-workers retired as well as still active. Four of the five present Officers of Local 689 and shop stewards were present for the entire week end. I can truly say we had a ball, and are looking forward to next year.

Recording Secretary Anthony Garland and Assist Business Agent Sheila Quarles are attempting to bring the **Depot Clerks** together by hosting a series of meetings. If you're a clerk its time for you to get involved with the issues pertaining to you! Call the hall to speak to one of them to find out when the next meeting will be held.

The **Local 689 Softball League** season came to a close. Congratulations to all the members who played throughout the season. Northern and Royal Street played the championship game.



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The Northern Boomers, coached by Gary Garnett won the championship. We must also recognize and thank the oldest continuous player in the league, Bennie Queen. Brother Queen plays for the Bladensburg Pirates and he personifies true sportsmanship and love of the game and the team. Thank you to the 689 Sports Committee, Rob Loman, and Brother Jesse Powell for stepping in on short notice and cooking. Local 689 is truly fortunate to have a Basketball and Softball League. I urge every member to come out and support a team. Members make it possible and our support through participation and attendance is why our local is one of the few in the ATU that has a yearly season. Both leagues are co-ed and all you have to do is be a member to join a team. Congratulations to you and I look forward to pitching the ball out next year. I would also like to take a moment to remember Reggie Collins who played on Four Miles team for many years, this year we truly missed his presence in the game and his side line commentary. Our dear friend passed away earlier this year. He will always be Local 689's softball pitcher in our hearts.

The Team started August with a bang! We have scheduled visits to the various work locations to visit our members. Every time an officer goes into the field members are pleased to see us, and they get a chance to ask questions and talk about issues that may concern them specifically. Right now, during this positive re-building of Local 689, it is important that members receive answers to questions and get the straight truth concerning the many different issues facing our local as a whole. I have heard the rumors, myths, and embellished facts, and I am astonished and saddened by how we got to this point. But for me, the question becomes how are we going to survive? Building confidence in our local union and the leadership is the most important task we can perform. The Officers, Executive Board members, and Shop Stewards had meetings last month to dialogued about the answer to this issue. We have been speaking to you via website, union meetings, the last newsletter and to bring the issue to the forefront of every members mind. Good representation is the best cure for what ails labor unions and specifically Local 689. Yesterday we were at Greenbelt from 11 am- 5 pm. All five Officers of Local 689, Jackie, Butch, Garland, Jeter and Lockley, as well as assistant business agent, Shelia Quarles-Alston visited the members of the maintenance facilities, track equipment mechanics, and radio technicians to name a few. As well as train, interlocking, and start up operators. Thanks to all who allowed us to pass through discretely and say hello. The next visits will be at Shady Grove on Monday August 20, 2007 at 6:30 in the Shop and August 31, 2007 at Bladensburg from 11 am -5:00 pm. I enjoyed getting out among

members and speaking to them first hand for a change. I look forward to seeing you soon.

The next topic is one that has cause our local to be catapulted into a state of flux for 6 months. **Bills about us in the Senate (S-1446) and House(HR-401), your Retirement, the Examiner and Overtime.** This topic has spawned much conversation. I can truly say that it's got us talking to each other. Some of the talk has been in the positive, some in the negative. Let's take the positive first. In last Tuesday's paper an article was run concerning the bills. **It quoted Tom Davis as stating that he knows that the bill for Metro to receive the 1.5 billion in funding will go through but the amendments will be stripped beforehand.** That is what we have been predicting all the time. But I will continue to be cautious and continue to send letters in to those committee members on the House Oversight Committee. The Congress is in recess and it will still have to encounter a full floor vote. The Senate bill is clean with only amendments which do not concern collective bargaining, although there is a question about the amendment concerning communications equipment and installation. I would like to say thank you to all to the members who took the time to protect our collective bargaining rights. That's what having a union is all about. It is not each man for themselves but clearly through collective efforts we can make a difference in what happens to all of our brothers and sisters. But we can not bury our heads in the sand and pretend that this did not happen and why! Recently a great deal of clamor is concerning on NTO's and e-mails from management attempting to place limits on overtime.

Let me simply state that just like in the case of these bills, we have a collective bargaining agreement, signed by both the Authority and The Union. We both have agreed on the terms and conditions in which each classification can be assigned overtime. We must file grievances when that is violated and you must not allow the violations to occur on your behalf. Now this is where the rubber meets the road. Because of the articles they want to cut down on the overtime because quite frankly, the publicity from the Examiner was horrify to the jurisdictions, who contribute to our lively hood. Now was it blown out of proportion, yes. The Examiner took 175 people out of 10,000 employees and attempted to make it appear that the sky was falling. Was the article ludicris, yes, because some of them were managers, who have a larger salary base anyway, but no matter what it cause a knee jerk reaction which created the amendments that Tom Davis penned in HR-401. Senior Executive Board member/Shop Steward, Michael Myrick, in his newsletter called it **Union Power** today and I think that is a fitting title.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS CONCERNING YOUR RIGHTS TO UNION REPRESENTATION!!

Unionized employees have had the right to have a union representative present at investigatory interviews since 1975, when the U.S. Supreme Court decided the case of *NLRB v. J. Weingarten, Inc.* Since the case involved a clerk being investigated by the Weingarten Company, these rights have become known as Weingarten Rights.

What is an investigatory interview?

An investigatory interview occurs when a supervisor questions an employee to obtain information which could be used as a basis for discipline or asks an employee to defend his or her conduct. If an employee has a reasonable belief that discipline or other adverse consequences may result from what he or she says, the employee has a right to request union representation.

These interviews usually relate to subjects such as:

absenteeism	insubordination	lateness
drinking	theft	sabotage
fighting	work performance	violation of work
poor attitude	procedures	falsification of records
accidents	drugs	

In those situations and upon the employee's request for a union representative the employer cannot require the employee to meet without the union representative present. The failure to observe an employee's Weingarten right constitutes a violation on the National Labor Relations Act and makes any resulting discipline of the employee unlawful. Rules to follow:

1. You must make a clear request for union representation before or during the interview. You cannot be punished for making this request.
2. After you have made the request, the employer must choose from among three options.
 - Grant the request and delay questioning until the union representative arrives and has a chance to consult privately with the employee; or
 - Deny the request and end the interview immediately; or
 - Give the employee a choice of: (1) having the interview without representation or (2) ending the interview immediately.

If a supervisor denies your request for union representation and continues to ask questions, he or she is committing an unfair labor practice and you have the right to refuse to answer.

Remember you cannot be punished or disciplined in any way for using the Weingarten Rights.

During the interview there are certain rights of the union representative because supervisors will often assert that the only role of a Union representative at the interview is to observe the discussion. However, The Supreme Court clearly acknowledged a union representative's right to assist and counsel workers during these interviews. The Supreme Court used past decided cases to establish the following procedures:

1. Once the union representative arrives, the supervisor must inform the representative of the subject matter; i.e., the type of conduct for which discipline is being considered (lateness, violation of safety rules, accident, etc.).
2. The union representative must be allowed to take the worker aside for a private pre-interview conference before questioning begins.

Continued on next page.

3. The union representative must be allowed to take the worker aside for a private pre-interview conference before questioning begins.
4. The union representative must be allowed to speak during the interview. The union representative, however, does not have the right to bargain over the purpose of the interview.
5. The union representative can request that the supervisor clarify a question so the worker can understand what is being asked.
6. After a question is asked, the union representative can give advice on how to answer.

When the questioning ends, the union representative can provide information to the supervisor.

It must be emphasized that if the Weingarten rights are complied with, union representatives have no right to tell workers not to answer questions or to give false answers.

In 1982, the board issued a decision extending Weingarten rights to non-unionized employees, but reversed the decision only three years later when it concluded that Weingarten principles do not apply absent a unionized workforce.

Now, 15 years later, the Board has tossed aside its prior interpretation, and non-union employers must grapple with a new rule for their disciplinary process.

Organized labor may find the decision unpopular because the NLRB now has granted an important right to non-union employees that for at least the last 15 years has been extended only to unionized employees. Non-union employees now have the same right - without having to pay union dues - courtesy of the NLRB.

REMEMBER KNOW YOUR RIGHTS & USE THEM!!



Where is the power?

The power department is involved with a variety of different projects that will help the authority improve service. One of the most important things that the power department provides is power to the third rail of the train. The power department also provides power to other Metro owned facilities. To bring power to these important entities, it takes a lot of beyond the scene people and equipment. Such as AC and DC load breakers Transformers rectifiers inverters batteries just to name a few. Due to continuous and on going use, this equipment has aged and has to be replaced, if we are to expect continuous reliable safe service. Under the capital improvement plan money has been appropriated to provide such replacement. It also takes power personnel who are knowledgeable and dedicated to ensure that this equipment is properly replaced. At night time when the city regional areas are asleep, there are maintenance personnel who are hard at work restoring power and equipment. Throughout the day there are power personnel who are continuously checking the equipment and facilities for problems. The power department has implemented a emergency response crew, whose responsibility is to respond to loss of power and emergency situation during peak rush-hour periods, so that riders can get to their destinations dependably and safely. The power department is very vigilant when it comes to safety, and throughout the authority's history the power department has not had a casualty at this time. This stands for a good start in the vision of the union and authority's safety endeavors.

By Jeffery Williams

Local 689 Health Watch!

This month will focus on types of cancer.

For more health information please visit our website

www.atulocal689.org

By: Sheila Quarles-Alston



Ovarian Cancer

Each year about 23,000 women in the United States are diagnosed with ovarian cancer; 14,000 of them die of the disease. Ovarian cancer is the sixth most common cancer in women.

Symptoms

A woman's chances for survival from ovarian cancer are better if the cancer is detected in its early stages, before it has spread from the ovary to other organs. But early ovarian cancer is difficult to find.

Often there are no symptoms and, in many cases, the cancer has spread by the time it is found. The cancer may grow for some time before it causes pressure, pain, or other problems. Even when symptoms appear, they may be so vague that they are ignored. The disease may cause a loss of appetite or a feeling of fullness, even after a light meal. Other symptoms may include gas, indigestion, nausea, and weight loss. A large tumor may press on nearby organs, such as the bowel or bladder, causing diarrhea or constipation, or frequent urination.

Causes of Ovarian Cancer

Researchers do not know what causes ovarian cancer, but studies of large numbers of women document certain factors that increase a woman's chance of developing ovarian cancer. Keep in mind though, that most women with these risk factors do not get ovarian cancer, and many women who do get the disease have none of the risk factors we know about.

The following are some of the known risk factors for ovarian cancer:

- **Family medical history.** According to the American Cancer Society, about 7% of ovarian cancers result from inherited risks. The risk of getting ovarian cancer increases for a woman whose close relative (mother, sister, daughter) has had the disease. The risk is especially high if two or more close relatives have had the disease.
- **Childbearing.** Women who have never been pregnant are more likely to develop ovarian cancer than are women who have had children. In fact, the more times a woman has been pregnant, the less likely she is to develop ovarian cancer. There is an apparent relationship between the number of times a woman has menstruated and the risk of developing ovarian cancer: more cycles appear to increase the risk, while pregnancy and breast-feeding will reduce the risk.
- **Fertility drugs** Some studies found that long-term use of the fertility drug clomiphene citrate without resulting pregnancy may increase a woman's risk for ovarian cancer, however, recent much larger studies do not support these findings.
- **Age.** The risk of developing ovarian cancer increases as a woman gets older. Most ovarian cancers occur in postmenopausal women over the age of 50; the risk is especially high for women over 60.

Breast Cancer . Women who have had breast cancer are twice as likely to develop ovarian cancer as are women who have not had breast cancer. Women with the Breast Cancer 1 gene mutation have a 40-60% increased risk of ovarian cancer. Women who think they may be at risk for developing ovarian cancer should discuss this concern with their doctor, who can plan an appropriate schedule of checkups.

The Importance of Early Detection

Women who have regular pelvic exams (every 1 to 3 years if you are under 40 years old, annually if you are over 40) increase the chance that, if ovarian cancer occurs, it will be found before the disease causes symptoms. However, pelvic exams often cannot find ovarian cancer at an early stage. When the lab is unable to determine whether your Pap is normal or abnormal, the **HPV (human papillomavirus) test will let you know quickly if you have a high-risk type of the virus** and thus need further examination to catch any abnormal cells that need treatment. Without the HPV test, you would have to wait several months and then repeat the Pap. This means you would have to wait a while until you know whether you need further examination. For many women, this wait is a very anxious time.

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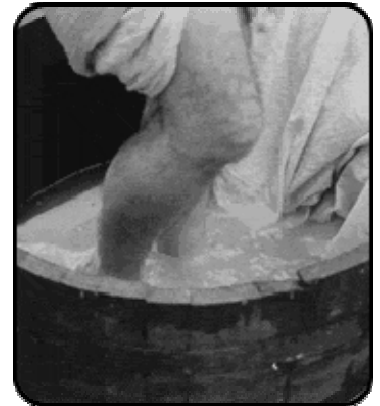
Do you appreciate your job?

By Trievta Haley

What are the positive aspects of your field of employment? Do you get along with your coworkers? What about the benefits that are provided for you, are they sufficient? Do you accumulate paid vacation, and sick leave? Do you have the ability to enroll in a 401k plan as well as an established pension plan funded by your employer? Does your employer provide you with access to medical and life insurance? Consider the salary that you are paid, is it a living wage or better?

Hour per day: Prior to 1940 people worked over 12 hours a day and 6 days a week. As a matter of fact, most companies provide the above-mentioned benefits and many more benefits are as plentiful and as creative as the imagination allows. Not all companies offer paid benefit or any benefits at all. As union members our benefits are negotiated by our local ATU and due to that fact alone we are offered a standard amount of protection, of course there are negative aspects of work. Sometime we make choices that we feel we are stuck with or have become involved within fields of employment we would not have previously considered.

Employees have become more miserable or angry and start to detest reporting to work on time or at all. To make matters worse, how about the supervisor that is overzealous and clueless, or the boss that you make look good by doing his job due to the fact that he is incapable or lazy, or answering to people we feel are not even capable of understanding our response to them. There are times when we may have to submit to disciplinary action which may include an oral or written delivery. People living during the Victorian age could and were dismissed for any reason with no recourse, but again we have the protection of the union and even the law. Some may say that times are hard; but consider that our jobs afford us the opportunity to live in decent housing, eat good healthy food, (people are starving and homeless today in the United States) and travel if we so choose, purchase cars, pay for our children's education and provide for our families. So think about it. If we are not appreciative of the jobs we have, maybe we should take a look back in time.



A fuller has to walk around in containers of urine in order to produce wool.



An Arming Squire had to run out into battle to replace Knights armor.

Now imagine if you lived during the medieval times, where as a member of the working class, your choices were not too plentiful, but they were creative in beneficial, at least to noblemen and ladies who were being served. Keep in mind this is the 13th Century where castles were being built and cathedrals were being constructed. There was a position called a fuller, the person holding this position was required to walk up and down up to 10 hrs in huge containers of stinking stale urine and raw wool, this action produced ammonia which was used to draw the lanolin from wool, which in turn created very soft wool, or what about leech collector who was required to stomp barefoot through the mud hoping the parasite would attach to them after which they would have to remove them and place them into a jar to transport the leeches to the leechers. Maybe you would find the duties of an arming squire interesting, he was required to serve a five year apprenticeship where his duties would have him running into the thick of combat unprotected to replace the broken armor on his

knight, if the squire was killed while performing his duties he was simply replaced. After the battle if his boss survived the squire was to remove the blood and gore coated excreta filled suit, which then was scoured with sand, vinegar and urine. What if you lived within the Tudor age during the 1600's, you could apply for the position of groom of the stool, whose duties consisted of cleaning and whipping the rear end of the king (and toilet paper have not yet been invented) after he defecated as well as cleaning his toilet and administering enemas or laxatives. The groom also was required to lay the stool on a plate and inspect it. Continuing to speak of waste collectors there is also the Saltpeter man, who would force their way into the homes of friends, family and neighbors to collect the urine which is used to manufacture saltpeter which would then be made into gunpowder. For some reason urine has played an integral role in society including its application in our day and time, ladies check out the ingredients in makeup specifically urea.

The only grounds for promotion were death of one holding the desired position, and luck that you would be chosen to be the predecessor, and of course if you didn't work you weren't paid you may have even been beat or disabled by your employer and left to survive or die, there was no right to refusal some of you may not be able to admit that you do have a job worth appreciating.

Congratulations to All Metro Retirees!

Reaching retirement is the greatest achievement we can obtain. We wish you many years of fun!!!

March 2007

George Adams
Russell Cisco
Paul Dungee
John Dunn
Floyd Edmonds
Garry Gans
Wilburt McLeod
John Richards
Marian Thorton
Richard Treat

April 2007

James Alford
Ricardo Balles
Calvin Barr
William Campbell
Ozell Carter
Edward Cromwell
James Daniels
Willie Dixon
Wilmer Eppard
Larry Gilchrist

April 2007

Donald Hackett
Otis Hagans
Timothy Harris
Thomas Haywood
Edward Hill
Edward Hubbard
Rodney Johnson
Albert Jones
Linda Jones
Joan Jurado
Helen McGill

LeFrancino McKay
Jerome Merritt
Francis Myles
William Nutt
Clifton Offord
McKenzie Rider
Eddy Salce
Nicholas Saleik
Carl Scott
Nannie Simms

April 2007

Don Singletary
Margaret Smith
Leon Swanson
Dilworth Thomas
John Tillman
Gary Vaughn
George Ward
Keith Wilkerson

May 2007

Edward Alfred
Marvin Bibby
Eugene Brown
Newton Carskadon
Steven Dixon
Charles Dorchy
Deborah Downs
Terrence D'Souza
Andrew Edwards
Bernard Gilchrist
Wilbert Gramby
Randy Grooms

May 2007

Charles Harris
Charles Hart
Joseph Henry
Eugene Madison
Henry Marrow
Joseph Nabinette
Greg Nickens
Russell Pelletier
Alvin Porch
Stephen Richeson
Henry Thompson
Joyce Tinsley-Wilkens
Myron Williams

June 2007

Johnny Smoot
Alwyn Alli
Charles Davis
Kevin Arrington
Joan Artwell
Leslie Gibson
Plato Greene

June 2007

Donna Grier
Bernard Hamm
Robert Harris Jr.
Ernest Johnson
Sung Kwak
Richard Lee
Burton Lewis Jr.
Albert Logan
Allen Lucas
John Mitchell
Edward Overton
Jasper Pendergrass
Julius Penn
Terrance Scheele
Freddy Sullivan
Dianne Swann
Marian Thorton
James Brady

ATTENTION ALL METRO RETIREES!!

Please note the recent changes to the
Retirees' luncheons:

1. Retired Members (Three Luncheons):
\$20.00
2. Spouse Members (Three Luncheons): \$23.00
3. Guest (Per Luncheon) :\$10.00

Date for Luncheons:

1. October 25, 2007
2. March 27, 2008

The Associations Officers and Board Members ask that you reserve your place no later than the Friday prior to the luncheon.

Please call any of the following to reserve:

Maxie Stallworth: 202-889-7165
Frederick Taylor: 301-350-5626
Bernice Barnes: 240-678-8257

OBITUARIES

***WITH SADNESS WE ANNOUNCE THE PASSING
OF OUR FELLOW
LOCAL 689 MEMBERS***

March 2007

Walton D. Beach
Raymond S. Melvin
Matthew C. Brooks

April 2007

Robert A. Callaway
Alton E. Crabbe
Angelo H. Griggs
Horace P. Haithcock
Albert R. Nelbach
Norman E. Nelson
William F. Southworth
Stanley C. Bradley
Irving T. Wimmer
Norman H. Collins III

May 2007

Reginald M. Collins

May 2007

Rudolph V. Cooper
Raymond V. Cooper
Andrew G. Susa
Douglas X. Thomas
Elmer R.. Whitsett
Shountay Yelverton
Helen R. Merritt
June 20007
Dennis R. Creay
Woodrow C. Fleming
Warner H. Long
Meigs A. Newkirk
Edmund C. Nussear
Gerald E. Sarr
Chester V. Wasielewski
Garnett B. Weatherford Sr.

• **Attend Your Union Meetings!**

- 1st Tuesday Evening of Each Month @ 8:00 p.m.
- The Following Wednesday Morning of Each Month @ 10:00 a.m.

The meetings are held at your Union Hall:

2701 Whitney Place
Forestville, MD 20747

Phone: 301-568-6899
Fax: 301-568-0692
Health and Welfare: 301-568-2294
E-mail: unionhall@atulocal689.org
Newsletter E-mail:
newsletter@atulocal689.org



LOCAL 689 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Local 689's Seventh Annual Fish Fry



When: Saturday, August 25, 2007

12 noon– 5 p.m.

Where: 2701 Whitney Place

Forestville, MD 20747

Bring the whole family out to this year's Fish Fry!!



**Union Dues
increased as of
July 1, 2007 from
\$49.95 to \$51.25.**

The dues amount for pensioners remains \$6.40 and for pensioned part-timers it is \$44.85.

Sincerely,
Esker Bilger Jr., FST

Shop Stewards

Beverly Cooper
Jacob Ayers
Warren Chapman
Brenda Quarles-Cummings
William Dudley

Barbara Middleton
Derrick Gray
Calvin Barnes
Byron Barnes
Eddie Broidy

Donald Parish
William Cuff
Diane Boyd
Timothy Busby
Tracey Stokes

President:

Jackie L. Jeter

First Vice President:

Roland Jeter

Second Vice President:

Larry Lockley Jr.

Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Esker Bilger

Recording Secretary

Anthony Garland

Executive Board

Members:

James Alford
Shelia Quarles-Alston
Anthony Barnes
Earl Beatty
Herman Brown
Matthew Bryan
Walter Butler
Timothy Busby
Wilbert Cunningham
Joseph Farmer Jr.
Gerry Garnett
Nathan Hall
Judy Holton
Cathleen Jackson
Raymond Jackson
James Madaras
Michael Myrick
John Nixon
David Robinson
Gerard Webb