

Badger Lodge News



Newsletter for United Lodge 66, Machinists Union, AFL-CIO
Chartered: November 30, 1895



Vol. 14 No. 3

www.unitedlodge66.org or www.youtube.com/badgerlodge

March 2011

United Lodge 66 Business Meeting

March 11, 2011

7:00 PM

2609 W. Oklahoma Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53215
414-671-3800

*ALL Lodge Members are
Encouraged to attend.*

- **DAYTIME OFFICE HOURS - Tuesday thru Friday, 8AM to 4:30PM;** business can be done at the Business or Education Evening Meetings or by mail. **CHECK** the answering machine for hours open, 414-671-3800.
- The deadline for articles for the April 2011 edition of the **"Badger Lodge News,"** is March 18.
- Contract Issues **MUST** be settled by your Business Agent at District 10. **See last page.**
- March 2011 Education Evening is **March 17** at 7:00PM.

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United Lodge 66
Hall and
Union Office
is
SMOKE FREE.

Collectively We Bargain; Individually We Beg

-sign spotted in Madison, WI.

The protest in Madison over Scott Walker's attempt to use the budget crisis to destroy collective bargaining rights for unionized public employees has made national news. Hot on the heels of Egypt's use of social media to form a grassroots uprising, our own state is in the center of a homegrown movement to stand up for worker's rights. Here's a sampling of what your fellow citizens are saying via the internet and protest signs.

"A unionized public employee, a member of the Tea Party and a CEO are sitting at a table. In the middle of the table there is a plate with a dozen cookies on it. The CEO reaches across and takes 11 cookies, looks at the tea partier and says, look out for that union guy, he wants a piece of your cookie". - seen on Twitter.

I'm not in a union, and have disagreed with some union stances. But this is a fundamental civil rights issue and we don't need to roll back the clock to 1894. - *Marge A., via Facebook*

Watched a sample of news programming this AM including Fox, to see how all sides are covering the protest. One of the Fox people referred to the protesters as "thugs". "Thugs"?? for exercising our right to free speech, freedom of assembly? In that case, I guess America was founded by "thugs"..... - *Chris K., via Facebook.*

The "thugs" here have been nothing but peaceful. Hmmm are they trying to stir the pot because they have no other reason to get all hyper? *Alison M., a Madison police officer, via Facebook, in response to the above.*

Scott Walker makes George W. Bush look like a genius! - sign at the Capitol protest.

If I stab 180,000 coworkers in the back, can I get a job in your cabinet too? - sign at the Capitol protest.

The Cheese Does Not Stand Alone! - *Sara B., via Facebook, upon learning that a solidarity protest was taking place in New York City.*

Enjoy your weekend? Thank a Union! - sign at the Capitol protest.

When they invented Cheeseheads, Walker just got the holes. - *Winston B., via Facebook.*

Can the national guard teach geometry? - protest sign outside the Rotunda.

I'm fairly certain that the counter protesters showing up today will dismiss the fact that they are able to come demonstrate today without missing work is a result of work of collective bargaining a century ago. - *Jeanne S., via Facebook*

I think Republicans need a history lesson. - *Andy S., via Facebook*

The governor is refusing to accept his own share of responsibility for the state's projected \$137 million shortfall. Just last month, he and the Legislature gave away \$117 million in tax breaks, mostly for businesses that expand and for private health savings accounts. That was a choice lawmakers made, and had it not been for those decisions and a few others, according to the state's [Legislative Fiscal Bureau](#), the state would have had a surplus. - *Editorial, The New York Times*

Walker is a TURD. Madison Sewer Workers Local 236. - sign at the Capitol protest.

Not in MY Wisconsin!!! - sign at the Capitol protest.

"The Power of OUR Union is Directly Related to YOUR Level of Activism in OUR Union."

It's Time to Look at Our Values

By Elaine Bergstrom

My daughter Kriista, who is deaf and has Down Syndrome, is the reason I still live in Wisconsin. After my divorce some years ago, I looked into moving to Ohio where my parents live. They were getting older and I am an only child. Counselors at Kriista's school looked into Ohio services and told me, "Don't move there. There are no services for her to equal these."

They did not need to tell me twice. Years ago, I stayed with friends in the DC area of Virginia whose girls went to a high school with more than 5,000 students. It had a Cray computer, but no swimming pool. There were no public pools in their area and their lakes were privately owned and rather expensive. When you see poor kids playing in fire hydrants in DC in the summer, realize it's that or the fountains. I am thankful we have pools and parks and free lakefront beaches here in Milwaukee County.

I live in Wisconsin because I believe in what our state offers its citizens, but I have seen these eroded time and time again. I recall when Milwaukee County residents voted for a .5% sales tax hike to raise money for the parks. Our then-county exec, Scott Walker, ignored the will of his constituents. And for what? A half a penny on every dollar spent here? How much would that increase affect, well, just about anyone not buying a luxury car or a yacht?

While the teachers and union members were marching in Madison this past week, I was wondering how the budget will affect my adult daughter. I have already seen her one social program, supported by Easter Seals in Southeastern Wisconsin, cut by about 10 weeks per year because of money issues. She dances, she bowls, she has a great time with her boyfriend — only now she does it that many weeks less. On the weeks there are no programs, she brings me the calendar and reminds me when they are starting up again.

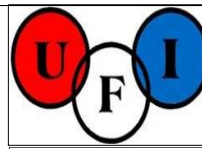
Even worse, her work program at Goodwill has been under attack because it is "warehousing the handicapped." I will happily post a video of my child's reaction when I tell her she cannot go to her "warehouse" again; she would be devastated and I suspect it would go viral. A snow day, that most kids would relish, already leads to a full meltdown until she calms down, her personal sun comes out and she starts helping us shovel.

For years, I saw a letter come with my annual state tax forms saying that income taxes had again been cut. I, for one, want to pay more. Let's say the state raised our taxes a reasonable 2%. Taking at my last tax return as a benchmark, this comes out to the equivalent of two Starbucks vente lattes per week! Is this really going to affect my buying power? Will I really not buy a home because I am taking home \$10 per week less? If so, should I be thinking about buying anything?

And, we can't even voluntarily do our part to help the things we love. We can contribute on our taxes for Lambeau field (I do) and for endangered resources (I do that, too), so why don't we at least have the option to pass part of our refunds back for things like our parks?

What our money-bought GOP legislators forget as that makes for a business-friendly state is not just the money. We have everything here, including that great lake which, as water becomes ever more precious, may turn out to be the equivalent of oil

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Union Financial, Inc.

Social Security Income

Contributed by: Brian Goode, Financial Rep. with Principal Financial Group & the Union Alliance Financial Team. Brian is a dues paying member of IAM Local Lodge 66. Brian is available for a no cost financial consultation for all Lodge 66 members.

Estimating your future Social Security benefits used to be a difficult task, but not any longer. Every year, the Social Security Administration (SSA) provides a Social Security Statement to working taxpayers aged 25 and older. This statement, which is sent automatically two to three months before a taxpayer's birthday, provides a report of how much the taxpayer and his or her employer paid in Social Security taxes and a summary of the estimated benefits the taxpayer may be eligible to receive now and in the future.

The Social Security Administration will also provide a statement to any taxpayer who requests one. To request a statement, simply submit a copy of the Social Security Statement request form (SSA-7004).

You can obtain a copy by calling 800-772-1213 or by applying online at www.ssa.gov.

This form will ask you for a number of facts, including your name, Social Security number, date and place of birth, your mother's maiden name, your previous year's earnings and an estimate of your current and future earnings, and the age at which you plan to retire.

Based on this information and its own records of your previous Social Security payments, the SSA will produce a four-page Social Security Statement, which will arrive in two to four weeks, that lists the benefits you're likely to receive upon your retirement, as well as general facts about Social Security and Medicare and the assumptions used in estimating future benefits.

Monthly Benefit

The Social Security Statement contains an estimate of the amount you would receive if you were to retire at age 62 (the earliest date you can receive benefits), the amount if you waited until full retirement age (which currently ranges from 65 to 67, based on year of birth), and the larger benefit you would receive if you continued working until age 70 before claiming retirement benefits.

Survivor's and Disability Benefits

The statement also shows what your disability benefit would be if you were to become fully disabled right away, as well as what your survivors might be entitled to if you were to die right away. For example, your children would receive a percentage of your retirement benefit until they reach age 18, and your spouse would receive a specific benefit while caring for a child and a different amount when reaching full retirement age.

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Deerbrook Bridge Runners Classic Cruise

By Doug Curler

On February 5, Lodge 66 member Bunny Browning and Roy Schneider a retiree of Lodge 510 made the trip up to Deerbrook, Wisconsin, to join me in participating in the 8th Annual Deerbrook Bridge Runners Snowmobile Club Classic Cruise. While our snowmobiles were not classics, Roy rode his 1996 Artic Cat and I ran my 1990 Artic Cat.

Part of my retirement plan has been to get my 1975 Artic Cat back into running order. It lost an argument with a tree a while back!

Langlade County has over 500 miles of snowmobile / ATV trails. There are trails looping through the forest in lengths from 10 miles to 70 miles. The trail we took was just under 40 miles long. This photo was taken at Jack Lake, one of the stops along our trip.

The Classic Cruise is an annual event. The registration fee of \$10 includes a Classic lapel pin and the chance to win \$100. After the ride, there is an evening of free food, refreshments and entertainment as well as a raffle drawing for a refurbished classic sled. More information is available at the website, www.deerbrookbridgerunners.com and you can see scenes from this year and past years on YouTube at www.youtube.com/nevabridgerunners and there is a Facebook page as well. Anyone can attend, so if you are a snowmobile enthusiast keep this event in mind for 2012 or get on the mailing list.

What is a Union?

An organization of workers joined together for a common purpose, for mutual aid and protection, to engage in concerted activity and collective bargaining, to elevate their conditions of life and labor; an organization by which ordinary people do extraordinary things.

Honorary Withdrawal Card

There is a \$1.00 Fee - It Is Not Free

There has always been a fee for the withdrawal card. All too often a member sends in the application for the card and expects one at no cost.

Withdrawal cards are allowed if:

- Left the trade because of illness
- Obtained employment outside the trade or industry.
- Furthering education.
- Obtained a supervisory position above the rank of working foreman.
- Because of circumstances over which I have no control, am compelled, as a condition of employment, to join another labor organization.

In order to get the withdrawal card a member must obtain such within two months of paying dues.

Reimbursement of Lost Time for Committee Person

While you will be reimbursed for lost time it may not be as fast as you would like if proper procedure is not followed. Please be aware reimbursement will only be done as stated in the letter from District 10 to Financial Officers dated January 23, 2009.

This must happen or be on file at the Lodge office:

- W4 must be completed by you and on file at the LL66 office. This needs to be done only once.
- Properly complete the Lodge 66 Reimbursement Form.
- Lost time must be approved by your business agent at District 10.

Since October 2006 all lost time is paid by ADP payroll. Payroll is done only twice a month. If you miss one payroll date then it will have to wait until the next. Lost time reimbursement forms must be into the LL66 office before the Monday of a payroll date.

Payroll dates are listed on the Calendar Page of our Lodge website at: www.unitedlodge66.org.

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fields. But it will mean nothing if our schools are garbage, our roads are potholed, transportation for workers is non-existent and our legislature is in the dark ages of money-is-everything. We had that, back at the turn of the last century, and with unity we overcame it.

With unity, we will again. If Egypt can topple a dictator, we can take on our own version of it and overcome. Next January, Scott Walker, it's topple time. Just wait.

Elaine Bergstrom is a Milwaukee writer and the author of 12 novels. You can read her blog at <http://elainebergstromblog.wordpress.com/>

Locked Into The Wrong Debate

We bite again

By Myles Dannhausen Jr.

February 25, 2011

PERSPECTIVE

We are so easily played.

For two weeks, we've gleefully sunk into a relatively petty debate about pension contribution percentages, health care benefits, and wages for middle class Americans. Often, this argument has devolved into simple jealousies, of one middle class worker upset that another has, thanks to a strong union, better wages and benefits than they have. It often sounds unsettlingly childish: "I don't have that so you shouldn't."

There are certainly details in Gov. Scott Walker's budget repair bill worthy of discussion and argument, but his bill is not being proposed in a vacuum. That is where we fall into the trap that takes us to the wrong debate.

I can't compartmentalize what's happening in Madison, can't plug it into a simple debate about whether the benefit packages of public workers are too generous or their wages too high. Or even about whether their unions should be weakened or busted.

In a vacuum, I would agree that contributions to health insurance and benefit plans should rise, but I'm not living in that vacuum that Mr. Walker, Mr. Obama, and most of Washington and Madison want us to move into. I won't be sucked into it, no matter how strong the pull of the powers that be – Democrats, Republicans, Wall Street or Big Ag, Obama or Bush or Clinton.

It wasn't our public workers who sunk the economy, sucking tax revenue from state budgets and dollars from pension funds and 401ks. Teachers didn't deregulate Wall Street or push home ownership policy for those who had no chance of affording it. Social workers didn't deregulate pharmaceutical companies so that they could use direct-to-consumer marketing to promote unnecessary or copycat prescription drugs to increase profits. Park rangers didn't drive up health care costs, making benefit packages far more costly for government than when they were originally negotiated.

Yet we are eating this up. We are, again, allowing large corporate interests to bait us into middle class jealousies and petty arguments as they scrape more profits off the backs of the public.

Somehow, the conversation has been skewed to the point that we accept a man arguing that a slight raise in taxes for corporations and the wealthy is unconscionable – that those at the top of the ladder have our best interests in mind – and that they need to have more cash on hand to make the decisions to get us out of this mess.

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Statement of Earnings

Finally, your report will contain a year-by-year summary of your earnings record (the years you worked, your taxed Social Security earnings, and how much you and your employers paid in Social Security taxes and Medicare). You should carefully check these numbers against your own records; occasionally, the Social Security Administration can make a mistake. It's best to resolve any discrepancies long before you need to claim retirement benefits.

It's interesting to note that the Social Security Statement includes a warning about the serious problems facing Social Security in the future. Language mentions the possibility that "In 2016, we will begin paying more in benefits than we collect in taxes. Without changes, by 2037 the Social Security Trust Fund will be exhausted and there will be enough money to pay only about 76 cents for each dollar of scheduled benefits."1 This is a reminder that taxpayers are ultimately responsible for funding their own retirements and that their future Social Security benefits may be lower than indicated by their Social Security Statements.

Source: 1) Social Security Administration, 2009

You can reach Brian Goode at his office at 262-898-1440 or email at goode.brian@princor.com for any questions on this topic or anything in regards to financial planning.

Activities for You and Your Family

- **Delegates to Milwaukee Area Labor Council: March 2, 2011.** All meetings start at 6:30PM.
- **United Lodge 66 Business Meeting** is Friday, **March 11, 2011 at 7PM.**
- **Delegates to District 10: March 14, 2011.** All meetings start at 7:30PM
- **United Lodge 66 Education Evening** for **March 17, 2011 at 7:00PM**
- **Machinists Union leaders wanted** for the nomination and election of officers and executive board members for United Lodge 66 covering the years of 2012 through 2014. There will be several openings at your Union. The nominations are in November 2011 and **election of officers in December 2011.**
- The class schedule for all leadership training at the **Machinists Union William W. Winpisinger Education and Technology Center** is available from your Union office and can be viewed at any of the meetings.

The way to balance the budget, they say, is to cut back on pay, benefits, and bargaining power for middle-income earners.

Why is it that any mention of taxing the wealthiest Americans is shouted down as class warfare, but cutting wages and benefits of middle-class Americans working in public service is not?

These public sector workers are the ones holding us back? Yes, those people who teach our kids, who plow our roads, who administer our increasingly complex local government operations. Yes, it is they who are tearing our country apart. These services, we are told, should be shuffled to the private sector.

We've privatized much of our military engagement in Iraq. The results have not been pretty and military leaders say the lack of accountability for our hired mercenaries endangers the safety of the soldiers who signed up for our armed forces. Should we privatize law enforcement here at home? Should we privatize education? What company, with a pure profit motive, will choose to educate the poor, the kids with bad parents, with disabilities, the kids who will pull down the school's test scores and make the school less attractive to investors and wealthy families?

If we privatize education, how long do you think it will be until corporate education interests demand government subsidies to educate the poor and handicapped? Do we not believe that they will demand subsidies that will drive up their profits, just as big agriculture, big pharma, defense contractors, and for-profit colleges do?

We've been cutting taxes on the wealthy, and cutting taxes for corporations, for the last 30 years. The Government Accountability Office reports that 72 percent of all foreign corporations and about 57 percent of U.S. companies doing business in the United States paid no federal income taxes for at least one year between 1998 and 2005.

I've heard too often the empty mantra that "we all have to sacrifice" in tough economic times. I've heard for a decade that we must lower taxes on the wealthy and on corporations so that they can spend and hire – so their dollars can trickle down upon us all to rescue us.

I have trouble buying this line that the rich must hold onto their money so they can spend it, while at the same time, our middle class earners should be accepting wage cuts, contribute more to their pensions, and pay more of their health insurance like good American patriots. We're told this even though it's painfully obvious that when middle class Americans get their hands on a few extra dollars, they put it right back into the economy to buy goods and services, while the wealthy are more likely to stock much of it away.

How has that trickled down? It's trickled down in big business cutting jobs, mechanizing labor, and sending factories overseas. It has trickled down...to the executive suites, where compensation for those at the top of the ladder is higher than ever.

It has trickled down to Wall Street, where bonuses are calculated on whatever scheme one can concoct to create

Con't

profits this year, regardless of how the scheme will affect the financial firm next year or what it will do to the larger economy or their low-level investors.

In my 32 years, we've faced six periods of financial crisis. That trend will not subside as long as we're focused on borrowing against the future to fix this year's economy, as long as Wall Street rewards itself for profits today regardless of what mess it creates tomorrow.

The men and women at the head of the big banks that led us into this mess walked away with tens of millions of dollars. They walked away with severance packages and the promise of another executive payday for another company down the road, because the system will not change. Because we will not stop rewarding those who game the system. Because in our system, demonstrating your ability to flaunt the rules for tremendous profit is essentially a successful job interview.

This argument over bargaining rights and pension contributions and wages for teachers takes our eyes and anger off the powerful places where the real money goes. The billions upon billions that go to defense contractors for weapons that do us precious little good when fighting guerrilla wars in the hills of Afghanistan or the streets of Iraq. Off the subsidies sent to Lockheed Martin, Halliburton, and Blackwater (now Xe), where employees are counted as private sector employees, as testaments to the power of capitalism. But those companies are propped up by Uncle Sam's defense spending, and by Uncle Sam's foreign policy.

But few are suggesting we cut those subsidies to balance the budget. There was precious little done to change the way Wall Street operates after the collapse. When we shuffled them billions to encourage lending, they did little lending, instead using it for acquisitions and to bolster their bottom lines.

If I sound a little angry, it's because I am. I am angry that we are so easily manipulated into fighting against each other while others drink from the government trough, our trough, with impunity. I am angry that after each gulp, they can throw a bone into our yard – watch us scratch and claw each other's eyes out over it, teacher against carpenter, town clerk against restaurant owner, social worker against banker – while they point and laugh, plotting their next move.

I am angry, because I am watching good people, good citizens, become willing pawns.

This article originally appeared at www.ppulse.com and was reprinted with permission.

News Editor Myles Dannhausen Jr. was born and raised in Egg Harbor. He lives in Fish Creek, where he coaches basketball at Gibraltar High School and is a contributing writer for Door County Living magazine and other publications.



Car Pooling

From Kenosha: Want to car-pool to Union Meeting? Contact Vice President Bob Paar for how it can be done: 262-605-0436 or bpaarosckenosha@yahoo.com



From Sheboygan: from Sheboygan or picking members up in Port Washington call: Ron Simmelink, 920-627-0325, from Kieffer & Company in Sheboygan.

Officers, LL66 Machinists Union

President Patricia Elizondo
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 jec/iamawll66, afl-cio

Wisconsin Protests



Directory for District 10 Office,

1650 S. 38th Street, Milwaukee, 53215; dial 414-643-4334, then extension for your Business Agent:

Russ Krings	13
Don Griffin	20
Ben Elizondo	19
Patrick O'Connor	17
Scott Parr	16
Greg Pursell	24
Janice DeSmidt (Organizer)	15

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