



MICHIGAN PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTER

The official publication of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union

www.mpffu.org

Volume 35

Number 1

Autumn 2010

MPFFU 49th Biennial Convention

Detroit, Michigan



Election Information Inside This Issue

**Please make sure
to register at
mpffu.org
to receive future
issues electronically.**

MPFFU

1651 Kingsway Court, Suite E
Trenton, MI 48183-1959
(office) 734.675.0206
(fax) 734.675.6083
mpffu.org

Staff

Editor *Terrence H. Chesney*
Circulation & Account Manager *Michelle Chesney*
Layout & Design *Mike Marinelli*
Advertising Sales *Mike Marinelli*

Postal Info

Known office of publication:

MPFFU
1651 Kingsway Court, Suite E,
Trenton, Michigan 48183.
Phone : 734.675.0206
Fax : 734.675.6083

Postmaster: Send address changes to:

Michigan Professional Fire Fighter
1651 Kingsway Court, Suite E
Trenton, Michigan 48183-1959
Phone: 734.675.0206
Fax: 734.675.6083
www.mpffu.org

You too, can be a contributor!

It's very easy to do. Just send us a story, a picture, or both. It can be about anything that is going on in your local or general information that has something to do with unionism or being a firefighter (union event or of fire, rescue or EMS incidents involving local members) and we will publish it on the web and/or magazine.

Please submit your material ASAP to:

MPFFU

1651 Kingsway Court, Suite E,
Trenton, MI 48183-1959

Phone: 734.675.0206

Fax: 734.675.6083

Email: tchesney@mpffu.org

Note: I also wish to remind you that it is the policy of the MPFF editorial staff to not publish any information that is sent anonymously.

OFFICERS



President
Mark Docherty
1651 Kingsway Court, Suite E
Trenton, MI 48183-1959
734.675.0206 (office)
734.675.6083 (fax)
586.243.9829 (cell)
maldocherty@comcast.net



Secretary-Treasurer
Terrence H. Chesney
1651 Kingsway Court, Suite E
Trenton, MI 48183-1959
734.675.0206 (office)
734.675.6083 (fax)
tchesney@mpffu.org

Vice Presidents



First/Third District
Chris Reynolds
1502 Michigan Ave.
Bay City, MI 48708-8773
989.225.2982 (cell)
989.894.2263 (station)
crp6242@msn.com



Second District
Shaun Abbey
8116 Oldfield Ct. SE
Byron Center, MI 49315
616.541.7117 (home)
616.299.5474 (cell)
shaunabbey@shgglobal.net



Fourth District
Steven Heim
1651 Kingsway Court, Suite E
Trenton, MI 48183-1959
313.468.3643 (home/cell)
313.382.1755 (fax)
313.381.1975 (station)
stevenheim@bcbmail.com



Fifth District
W. James Leve
10016 West J Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
269.375.9301 (home)
269.375.2551 (fax)
269.720.8499 (cell)
nffjup5@aol.com



Sixth District
Dan Dawe
1651 Kingsway Court, Suite E
Trenton, MI 48183-1959
248.227.8055 (cell)
248.409.1531 (station)
517.545.1280 (fax)
idd1721@shgglobal.net

mpffu.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Features

5 President's Message

7 MPFFU Election Endorsements

8 Secretary-Treasurer's Report

11 Act 312, November Election and House & Senate Turn-over

For the last 41 years since its creation, the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union has been defending and protecting Public Act 312 in the Michigan Legislature.

14 Legal Counsel

Your Union. Your Future.

16-19 Hot News From The Districts

20-27 49th Biennial Convention

The 49th Biennial Convention of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union was held on May 5-6-7, 2010 at the MGM Grand Hotel in Detroit. Two hundred and eleven (211) delegates, fifty-nine (59) alternates, and 148 guests attended the Convention.

28 Message from the Michigan AFL-CIO

In this time of oil spills, mining deaths, frustration with politics and financial corporations that ruin the economy, the public's trust in institutions is at an all time low.

29 Now more than ever, nation needs healthy unions

Unions are in decline. With just slightly more than 7% of the private sector unionized, the rate of membership is at record lows.

30 Around the State

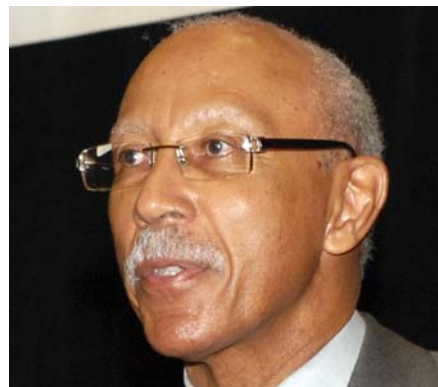
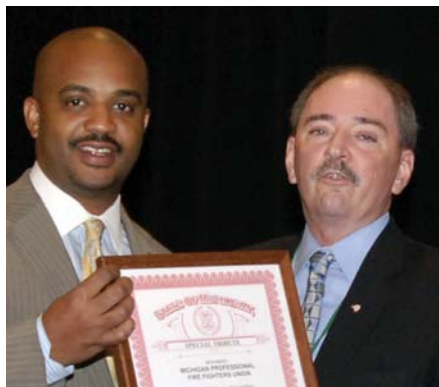
2010 IAFF/MDA National Firefighter Softball Champions AND River Rouge Local 517 In the Movies!

MPFFU Executive Board (2010-2012)



Top Row (L to R): Shaun Abbey (2nd District VP), Steven Heim (4th District VP), David Weisenberg (Western Trustee), Terrence Chesney (Secretary Treasurer), Daniel Dawe (6th District VP).

Bottom Row (L to R): Chris Reynolds (1st/3rd District VP), W. James Leve (5th District VP), Mark Docherty (President), Aileen Pettinger (Northern Trustee) and Ed Hosmer (Eastern Trustee).



AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE
MICHIGAN PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS UNION

REPUBLICAN RICK SNYDER:

WRONG CHOICE FOR MICHIGAN'S WORKERS

Rick Snyder Won't Say What He's About. Rick Snyder is a former businessman who "seemingly can't find the voice to actually articulate any of his positions," says one Detroit News commentator. Unfortunately, when he does speak up, it's bad for working families. (The Detroit News, 8/7/10)

✘ **Cutting Pay and Benefits.** He's short on details, but Snyder says he'll revamp the tax system to reduce corporate taxes. He says he would make up for the huge loss in state revenue by cutting the pay and benefits of our public employees. (The Detroit News, 1/6/10)

✘ **Signing Off on 'Right to Work.'** Snyder doesn't want to talk about his support for "right to work" legislation because it's a deal-breaker for workers, like us, who vote. Nonetheless, he has admitted that if it lands on his desk, he'll sign it. (The Detroit News, 7/18/10; Detroit Free Press, 8/18/10)

✘ **Outsourcing Jobs Overseas.** When Snyder was on the board of directors at Gateway, the company outsourced its manufacturing jobs to China and other countries. He ducks the responsibility, saying it wasn't his decision. (Detroit Free Press, 8/5/10)

WE CAN'T AFFORD TO LET THAT HAPPEN.

Your Union Supports Virg Bernero for Governor

Virg Bernero is on our side. He says, "Working people count. Manufacturing and small businesses matter. The American dream is worth fighting for." We can count on him to fight for a better Michigan for working families.



VOTE



VIRG BERNERO

NOV. 2

GOVERNOR, MICHIGAN



How you vote is a personal decision. Your union believes Virg Bernero is the best candidate for Michigan's working families. For more information, contact the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union at 734-675-0206.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

First, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for electing me as your new MPFFU President. I will work diligently to provide the services you need, to represent your interests in Lansing and aggressively go after those that seek to erode our benefits and rights.

We are facing some of the most difficult times the fire service has ever faced. As most municipalities are facing losses in revenue and budget deficits, public employees now have a bull's eye on our backs. Many residents believe that if they are suffering then we should also suffer and believe our hard fought for pay and benefits are too rich. I ask; where were they, when the private sector was getting 10% raises and huge bonuses. We didn't see them running to city council meetings demanding that we take huge raises. Although that scenario is frustrating, we also have to face reality and understand that in many of these communities there just isn't any more money and cuts have to be made. Even if your employer has a rainy day fund, many of these funds will not get them through the downturn. That being said, when faced with an employer requesting concessions, you need to make sure you are educated to the entire financial situation prior conceding to or fighting the cuts.

- Make sure you have an IAFF Municipal Financial Analysis completed. This should be done every year when your employer's annual audit is completed.

- Track the actual property tax figures from your county. They will issue the percentage of decrease or increase in property tax values each year.

- Track how your employer is prioritizing the cuts throughout the entire municipality.

- Know what your millage rate is and know whether there is room to increase it. We are seeing state wide that if a dedicated millage increase for fire is proposed, in almost all cases it has passed. If your employer is unwilling to place this on the ballot then you can through a petition drive.

- Know what the other bargaining groups in your municipality are doing and

make every effort to work with them on concession packages.

- This is the time to work on your Public Relations. Show the community all the positive things you do. Make an impact in your community. With all the negative propaganda about public employees right now, this is a very important area. Don't do things publically to get back at management that will make you look bad in the eyes of the residents. Always think before you do anything; How would this be viewed by the average resident? Positive or negative? Public opinion is everything right now and can be the difference when communities start looking at things such as contracting services or PSO for example.

- Lastly, I've said this a million times, GET POLITICALLY ACTIVE!!!!!! You need to be educating your local leaders to what and how you do what you do. You need to meet individually with your council or twp board members. You need to develop personal relationships. And you need to support those elected officials that support you!

At the state level, we continue to be attacked by anti union interests that are using this downturn as an opportunity to erode our rights. We constantly are facing attacks on PA 312 our binding arbitration law; our defined benefit pensions and continue to face "Right to Work" legislation. We will continue to oppose these attacks in Lansing and make every attempt to preserve your collective bargaining rights. But we need your help also! We all have to stand united in our fight! Please review the list of endorsed candidates for the upcoming General Election on November 2nd. These candidates need your support. When we make our endorsements, we do NOT make them based on which party they belong to. We make the endorsements based on what they believe in and if they are supportive of our issues. We also need PAC money to effectively support our endorsed candidates. This is something that we don't have enough of. Please visit the website if you are interested in contributing to our PAC.

We also are seeing another big push by



President
Mark Docherty
54465 Meadow Crest Circle
Chesterfield, MI 48047
586.716.8264 (home)
586.716.3845 (fax)
586.243.9829 (cell)
mardocherty@comcast.net

municipalities to cross train police officers as firefighters and form Public Safety Departments. This does not save money and only serves to destroy the fire department and increase police staffing. We have many tools and facts that we can use to fight this off, but they need to be utilized as soon as you hear any talk about it. Contact your District VP and he will get you the resources you need. It makes it a much more difficult fight once your council has approved it!

Many Private EMS agencies are also aggressively going after municipal contracts and using the economic downturn to their advantage. In many cases they are approaching your employer with bids even though the employer did not solicit the bid. Usually the private comes in and offers to perform the service for only what they can bill insurance for and allows the employer to cut the staff they currently use to transport. This can seem like an easy move for an elected official that is not educated to the differences between fire based EMS and Private EMS. Again it's imperative that you educate them before you are faced with this. It's much easier to fight off before your council has already voted to change.

Remember this: When a business cuts office staffing it forces longer wait times at the front desk, when a fire department cuts staffing, it dramatically increases our risk of injury or whether or not you get to go home to your family.

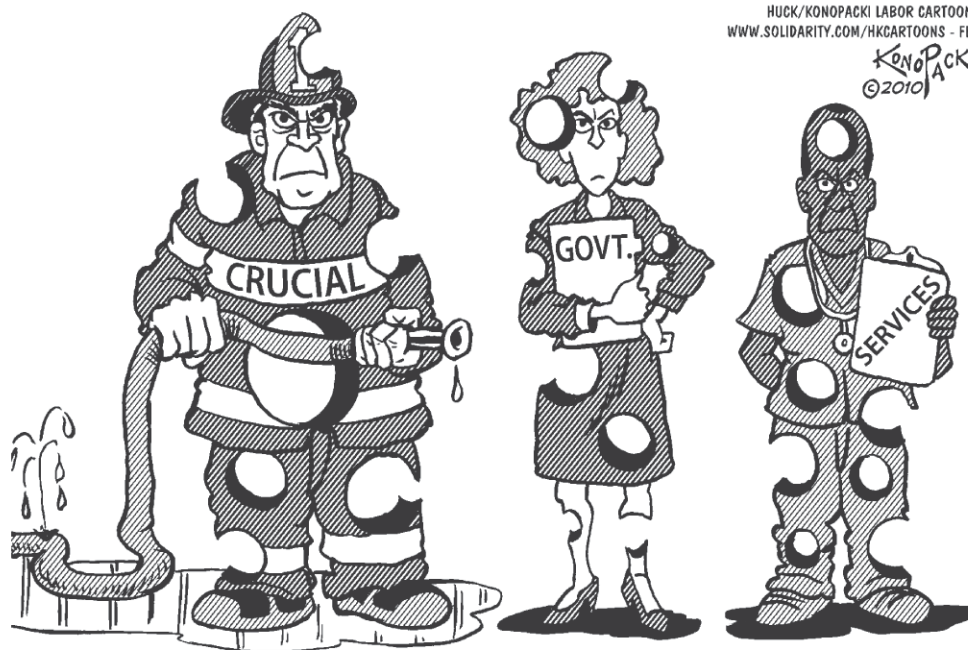
Make sure if you need anything; please contact your District VP for assistance. We have a great team and will do whatever we can to assist you.

BE SAFE! ●

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE
MICHIGAN PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS UNION

**This election is about
one thing. We need**

GOOD JOBS NOW



This election cycle, if our elected officials and candidates want our support, they're going to have to support a strong **Working Families Agenda.**

- ☒ Create jobs and put people back to work
- ☒ Protect public- and private-sector jobs
- ☒ Invest in vital public services and infrastructure projects
- ☒ Rebuild our manufacturing sector
- ☒ Fund unemployment and COBRA assistance
- ☒ Hold Wall Street accountable for its greed

**Lab★r
2010**

Support candidates who *REALLY* support working families.



For more information, contact Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union at 734-675-0206.

LT1-163130

The Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union has endorsed the following candidates for the upcoming general election on November 2nd

The MPFFU Executive Board considered several factors in making these endorsements including:

- The previous voting records of the candidates on our issues.
- Satisfactory completion of our MPFFU Candidate Questionnaire.
- The advice and counsel of our political consulting firm, Kelley Cawthorne.
- Direct interviews with many of the candidates.
- Recommendations by MPFFU local unions.
- The general overall strength of the candidates campaign.
- The long term benefit to the entire MPFFU membership.

The MPFFU did not make an endorsement in some of the districts because neither candidate in those districts satisfactorily met the above criteria to obtain our endorsement.

Please urge your families and friends to vote for these MPFFU endorsed candidates on November 2, 2010.

Governor

Virg Bernero

Supreme Court

Denise Langford Morris

Alton Davis

Michigan Senate

1 st District	Coleman Young
2 nd District	Bert Johnson
3 rd District	Morris Hood
4 th District	Virgil Smith
5 th District	Tupac Hunter
6 th District	Glenn Anderson
7 th District	Kathleen Law
8 th District	Hoon Yung Hopgood
9 th District	Steven Bieda
10 th District	Tory Rocca (R)
12 th District	Casandra Ulbrich
13 th District	Aaron Bailey
14 th District	Vincent Gregory
15 th District	Pam Jackson
16 th District	Doug Spade
17 th District	Randy Richardville (R)
18 th District	Rebekah Warren
19 th District	Mik Nofs (R)
21 st District	John Proos (R)
23 rd District	Gretchen Whitmer
24 th District	Rick Jones (R)
26 th District	Paula Zelenko
27 th District	John Gleason
29 th District	David LaGrand
31 st District	Jeff Mayes
32 nd District	Roger Kahn (R)
34 th District	Mary Valentine
36 th District	Andy Neumann
38 th District	Michael Lahti

Michigan House of Representatives

3 rd District	Alberta Tinsley Talabi
6 th District	Fred Durhal
7 th District	Jimmy Womack
9 th District	Shanelle Jackson
10 th District	Harvey Santana
11 th District	David Nathan
12 th District	Rashida Tlaib
13 th District	Andrew Kandreas
15 th District	George Darany
16 th District	Bob Constan
17 th District	Phil Cavanaugh (R)
18 th District	Richard LeBlanc
19 th District	John Walsh (R)
20 th District	Joan Wadsworth
21 st District	Dian Slavens
23 rd District	Deb Kennedy
24 th District	Sarah Roberts
25 th District	Jon Switalski
26 th District	Jim Townsend
27 th District	Ellen Lipton
28 th District	Lesia Liss
29 th District	Tim Melton
30 th District	Ken Lampar
31 st District	Marilyn Lane
32 nd District	Jennifer Haase
34 th District	Woodrow Stanley
35 th District	Rudy Hobbs
37 th District	Vicki Barnett
39 th District	Lisa Brown
42 nd District	Harold Haugh
48 th District	Rick Hammel
49 th District	Jim Ananich
50 th District	Charles Smiley
51 st District	Art Reyes
52 nd District	Mark Ouimet (R)
53 rd District	Jeff Irwin
54 th District	David Rutledge
55 th District	Mike Smith
56 th District	Kate Ebli

57 th District	Harvey Schmidt
60 th District	Sean McCann
61 st District	Thomas Batten
62 nd District	Kate Segal
64 th District	Martin Griffin
65 th District	Janet Rochefort
67 th District	Barb Byrum
68 th District	Joan Bauer
69 th District	Mark Meadows
70 th District	Michael Huckleberry
71 st District	Theresa Abed
75 th District	Brandon Dillon
76 th District	Roy Schmidt
79 th District	Al Pscholka (R)
83 rd District	Alan Lewandowski
84 th District	Terry Brown
85 th District	Pamela Drake
91 st District	Ben Gillette
92 nd District	Marcia Hovey-Wright
96 th District	Charles Brunner
97 th District	Mark Lightfoot
101 st District	Dan Scripps
103 rd District	Van Sheltroun
106 th District	Casey Viegelaahn
108 th District	Judy Nerat
109 th District	Steve Lindberg
110 th District	Scott Dianda

United States Congress

1 st District	Gary McDowell
5 th District	Dale Kildee
6 th District	Fred Upton (R)
7 th District	Mark Schauer
9 th District	Gary Peters
10 th District	Candice Miller (R)
11 th District	Thaddeus McCotter (R)
12 th District	Sander Levin
13 th District	Hansen Clarke
14 th District	John Conyers
15 th District	John Dingell

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

MPFFU Convention

This issue of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighter contains a lot of information about the 49th Biennial Convention of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union. Those that attended the event participated in designing the road map for the MPFFU for the next two years. In addition to the resolutions, the dynamic speakers, and the elections, attendees were able to network with leaders from locals around the State and share information and ideas for dealing with the important issue everyone is facing in this economic downturn.

The Stars

If you were at the Convention, thank you for taking the time out of your personal life to attend. Without you, there wouldn't be a convention. We thank you for playing a major role in making the MPFFU one of the best State Associations representing full-time career firefighters in the country!

Supporting Cast

Thanks to *Bill Eisner*, who is an Honorary Member of the MPFFU, we have pictures; lots of pictures of the Convention, proving the old adage that "A Picture **IS** Worth a Thousand Words!"

It takes a lot of people to plan and carry-out all the details necessary to hold a successful convention. *Local 344-Detroit* was our host and they began working on this event all the way back in 2007 when they decided to bid on hosting the convention and they reviewed potential locations in the City of Detroit to hold the event. Their choice ended up being the *MGM Grand Hotel*. Everything about the MGM was "Grand," first class and all of the employees of the Hotel were excellent to work with. Thank you MGM!

MPFFU staff also began preparation several months before the start of the convention. *Michelle Chesney, Laura Jensen, Mike Marinelli, Darcy Moore, and Ed Rigley* all played a major role before and during the convention and they deserve a great deal of credit as well as a BIG thank you!

Our exhibitors and sponsors also played a major role in providing opportunities for networking and learning about new products and services available to our members.

Please do whatever you can to support these individuals and companies. A list of their names and contact information can be found elsewhere in this magazine. *Thank you Exhibitors and Sponsors!*

Convention Committees are integral to the success of the Convention. They do a great deal of work prior to the convention; their discussion and debate in the *Constitution and By-Laws and Resolutions* committees oftentimes result in fine-tuning resolutions enough to make their passage on the convention floor almost effortless. The members of the *Credentials Committee* did a fantastic job in getting everyone registered in a prompt and efficient manner. The *Finance Committee* reviewed the financial records and remained on stand-by in case any financial questions arose. The *Election Committee* organized the voting procedures and processed the ballots for the elections in record setting time. The *Sgt-at-Arms Committee* often go unnoticed but they play a very important role in assuring that all of the rules of the convention are followed and all floor votes are counted fairly. Thank you to all of the Committees!

As stated earlier, Local 344 was a great host and they did an excellent job with the opening ceremonies as well as the reception they hosted in Greektown. *Thank you Local 344!*

Lastly, once everything was set-up and the convention was about to begin, the most important player took the field (podium) and ran the convention in an orderly and professional manner. That person was *IAFF 8th District Vice President Paul Hufnagel*. Paul graciously agreed to chair the convention and the delegates quickly accepted his offer. As usual, Paul kept everything running smoothly and on time. Paul makes running a convention look easy but we all know that keeping more than 300 firefighters in order is a very difficult task. For the first time in his career, Paul did stumble momentarily when a group of rowdy delegates insisted on voting on a late submitted resolution to honor Paul by naming him MPFFU President Emeritus. Overcoming several procedural false starts, the delegate body worked its way through the process and Paul was granted President Emeritus status. **THANK YOU Paul!**

Secretary-Treasurer

Terrence H. Chesney

1651 Kingsway Court, Suite E

Trenton, MI 48183-1959

734.675.0206 (office)

734.675.6083 (fax)

tchesney@mpffu.org



Changing of the Guard

Professional and personal relationships quickly develop between MPFFU Executive Board members, as well as with local union officers. I have always maintained that one of the most difficult things about being a State Union Officer is seeing your friends leave their union officer positions. I would like to thank 1st District Vice President Kevin Pirlot and 4th District Vice President Dan McNamara for all of their many years of hard work and dedication to the MPFFU and to the labor movement in general. You will be missed by the members of the MPFFU Executive Board as well as the members of the locals you represented.

Two new District Vice Presidents were elected at this Convention. Congratulations to 4th DVP Steven Heim and 6th DVP Daniel Dawe. Welcome to the MPFFU team!

Three other members ran for positions on the MPFFU Executive Board. Although Scott Halleck, Mickey Wiewiura and Dan McNamara were unsuccessful in their bids for election, each of them ran first class, professional campaigns. Defeat is never easy for anyone but each of you should be proud of your efforts. The MPFFU is stronger today because of your involvement. I am sure we can count on your continued involvement in MPFFU activities and events.

Congratulations are also in order to the newly elected MPFFU President, Mark Docherty. Mark has big shoes to fill. He follows in the footsteps of a very small and select group of distinguished former MPFFU Presidents. In the entire history of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union, there have only been a few MPFFU Presidents before Mark: Sie Chapple, Dan Delegato, Gary Thomas, Larry McColl and Paul Hufnagel. As 6th DVP, and in the short time he has served as MPFFU Presi-

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

dent, Mark has already exhibited many of the leadership traits that are common among his predecessors. Good Luck Mark!!

MPFFU Magazine

This will be the last printed copy of the *Michigan Professional Fire Fighter* that you will receive in the mail. Rising costs and the universal availability of immediate information on the internet are the main factors for this change. Future issues will be emailed to all members that are registered on the MPFFU Website and each issue will also be posted on the website. If you have not already done so, please register at uaw.mpffu.org so you continue to receive important information from the MPFFU.

Elections

One of the primary functions of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union is to be your voice in Lansing and to insure that your collective bargaining rights and health and safety are protected by legislation that employers are legally obligated to follow. Over the years, the MPFFU has been able to introduce and successfully lobby legislators to pass important laws that remain in place today such as; the right to collective bargaining, binding arbitration, residency, hours of work, pensions, health care, etc, etc.

Unfortunately, no legislation is guaranteed to stay in place forever. Every legislative session, someone introduces legislation

that would diminish our right to collectively bargain or eliminate PA 312 – Binding Arbitration, and numerous other harmful bills that would have a negative effect on your wages, benefits and working conditions; including your health and safety.

Our success in Lansing isn't just measured by what "helpful" legislation gets signed into law. It is also measured by what "harmful" legislation we stop from getting signed into law. We spend much of our time lobbying legislators to just keep what we have and although it isn't nearly as exciting and sensational as getting a new law passed it is equally, if not more, important.

The most important part of our Political Action program is to get "fire-friendly" individuals elected to office. If we have enough "friends" in the House and the Senate and in the Governors office, we can block the "harmful" legislation and possibly get new "helpful" legislation passed. There are several components to getting friends elected. We first need to educate the candidates about our issues then we need to identify who the friendly candidates are. We need to offer financial assistance so they can get enough voters to know enough about them so they will vote for them, we need to provide volunteers to assist with their campaigns, and most importantly, we need to get ALL of our members, including their families and friends, to stick together and **VOTE** for our endorsed candidates.

The members of the MPFFU Executive

Board have spent countless hours on deciding which candidates to endorse. Oftentimes, we are aware of more information than what is available to our members and some members are upset with our choices. I can assure you there is a substantial basis for each and every one of our endorsements. Although a particular candidate may have a personal relationship with you or your local, the MPFFU endorsements have taken all the information that we have available to us and because of that, we may have endorsed a candidate that isn't your favorite. Remember, our endorsements are made based on what is best for our members and the labor movement in general.

Please spend some time reviewing who the MPFFU has endorsed for the House and Senate Districts where you reside. We need these candidates to get elected in November. And finally, don't pay a lot of attention to the polling information about the Governor's race. Our endorsed candidate, *Virg Bernero* is going to win in November! Please tell everyone to *Vote for Virg*. It has been a very long time since we have had a candidate that is so passionate about the rights of workers and how important they are to the future of America. We will have a true friend in the Governor's office when Virg is elected. REMEMBER to *VOTE on November 2nd*. ●



VIRG BERNERO Fights for Us



VIRG BERNERO

VIRG BERNERO is a champion for working families. *"We need a government that stands with the American worker and I'm going to stand up and fight for that here in Michigan, and in Washington when necessary."* — VIRG BERNERO (CNN, 2/8/10)

ENCOURAGING JOB GROWTH.

Bernero created a special Small Business Growth Fund to help small businesses get the loans they need to create more jobs. (Lansing State Journal, 2/1/10)

FIGHTING FOR FAIR TRADE POLICIES.

Bernero will fight for trade policies that keep good jobs at home, instead of outsourcing them to China, India, Taiwan, Japan and Korea. He says, "If you want to sell it here, you have to make it here." (Candidate website, accessed 7/14/10)

DEFENDING THE AUTO INDUSTRY.

The son of a UAW worker, Mayor Bernero was outspoken in his support of federal assistance for the auto industry and the rights of Michigan's auto workers. (Bay City Times, 2/7/10)

Support Candidates Who Support Working Families

VOTE NOV. 2

VIRG BERNERO • GOVERNOR, MICHIGAN

How you vote is a personal decision. Your union believes Virg Bernero is the best candidate for Michigan's working families. For more information, contact Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union at 734-675-0206 or the Michigan State AFL-CIO at 517-487-5966.



Act 312, November Election and House & Senate Turnover

For the last 41 years since its creation, the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union has been defending and protecting Public Act 312 in the Michigan Legislature. This effort has been extremely successful over the years but has become increasingly more difficult. Due to a turbulent economy, the legislature had been looking at Public Act 312 as an area in which cost cutting reforms were possible. The MPFFU took a pro-active role in working with the Senate Republicans to craft a bill to reform Public Act 312 with positive cost saving changes while protecting our firefighters whose communities decide to consolidate their fire services. Senate Bill 1072 ensures that binding arbitration is protected for police and fire services in Michigan. The Senate and the House passed Senate Bill 1072 before they left for their summer break. We are anxiously waiting for the Senate to send the bill to the Governor for her signature.

There are a number of pieces of legislation that we are working directly with the House and Senate to see their passage before the end of the year. However, most of the time and attention of the legislature is

currently tuned to the November elections.

The November 2nd election will be extremely significant in Michigan's election history. Michigan will have a new Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State and is also guaranteed to change better than 50% of the Michigan Legislature. While some of those changes will involve seat changing in effect, with upwards of two-dozen current and former House members going to the Senate, it still means that of the 148 legislators at least 81 will be new to their positions in the House and Senate, a change of nearly 55% of the current Legislature.

In 2011, the House will have at least 54 new members out of 110 total due to Term Limits, resignations, members filing to run for higher office, and other vacancies. That's a minimum turn-over rate of almost 50%. Moreover, not one single member in a significant leadership position (Speaker, Minority Leader, Majority and Minority Floor Leaders, Appropriations Chair) is returning in 2011.

The Michigan Senate will have at least 29 new members out of 38 total due

Melissa Yutzey

208 N. Capitol Ave. 3rd Floor
Lansing, MI 48933-1356
517.371.1400 (office)
517.371.3207 (fax)
ky@kellycauthorn.com



to Term Limits. That's a minimum turn-over rate of at least 76%. Similarly to the House, not one member in a significant leadership role (save for President Pro Tem Richardville) is returning in 2011. Of the at least 29 new members of the Senate we project that 14 will be current House members with an additional 3 current House members as potential Senators.

With the significant turnover in state government, the entire membership of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union must be engaged in the education of our politicians on the many issues critical to health, safety and welfare of our firefighters. ●



Research Essentials

Fire fighters have filled the boot for MDA for more than 50 years — supporting MDA research, services and education in the fight against muscular dystrophy.

Thanks, fire fighters, for leading the way to a cure.



MDA
Helping Jerry's Kids

POLITICAL ACTION FUND CONSENT FORM

2011 Affirmative Consent For Political Contributions

Section 55(6) of the Michigan Campaign Finance Act provides that a "Labor Organization may solicit or obtain contributions for a separate segregated fund established on an automatic basis, including but not limited to a payroll deduction plan, only if the individual who is contributing to the fund affirmatively consents to the contribution at least once in every calendar year."

I, _____, authorize the Secretary-Treasurer of the MPFFU to deduct ☐ \$5.00 ☐ \$10.00
☐ \$20.00 ☐ Other: \$_____ on the 1st or 15th of each month for the purpose of making a political contribution to the
Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union PAC Fund. I understand that I can cancel this contribution at any time.

I want these funds deducted from:

- ☐ Checking account (voided check attached)
- ☐ Savings account routing # _____ Account # _____
- ☐ Credit card (Visa/Mastercard only) account # _____ Exp. Date _____
- Billing Address for Credit Card: _____ Zip Code _____
- Email Confirmation to: _____

THIS CONSENT IS FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2011

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Local Name and Number: _____ Shirt Size: _____

NOTE: A shirt or blanket will only be sent with a minimum \$10/month contribution. Please specify which item you would like to receive:
☐ Shirt/Size: _____ ☐ Blanket

Mail to MPFFU, 1651 Kingsway Ct. Ste E, Trenton, MI 48183

FIREPAC CLUB!

Protect the wages, rights, and employment you enjoy through Political Action!

Choose your level of support!

Superior \$100.00*

Your name in the MPFFU News, a MPFFU Fire PAC Lapel Pin, an MPFFU License Plate Frame and a MPFFU Fire PAC Golf Shirt.

Huron \$50.00*

Your name in the MPFFU News, a MPFFU Fire PAC Lapel Pin, and a MPFFU Window Cling.

Michigan \$75.00*

Your name in the MPFFU News, a MPFFU Fire PAC Lapel Pin, and an MPFFU License Plate Frame.

Erie \$25.00*

Your name in the MPFFU News, and a MPFFU Fire PAC Lapel Pin

I want to make an individual contribution to MPFFU Political Action!

Name _____

Address _____

Local # _____

Erie _____ Huron _____ Michigan _____ Superior _____

Shirt Size _____

* Personal checks only made payable to MPFFU Fire PAC

Mail to MPFFU, 1651 Kingsway Ct. Ste E, Trenton, MI 48183

2010 Contributors to the MPFFU Fire PAC Fund

Listed below are the names of MPFFU members that have contributed to the FIRE PAC fund during 2010. These members realize the importance of political action and understand the importance of contributing financially to insure that friends of firefighters get elected to office. Names with an asterisk next to them are monthly contributors through the electronic contribution program. This program makes it easy to contribute on a regular basis via your checking or savings account or with a credit card.

Just fill on the form on the preceding page and send it to the MPFFU office or call 1.800.886.7338 and we can take your information over the phone. If necessary, you can stop the electronic contributions anytime you desire to do so. As you read this issue of the **Michigan Professional Fire Fighter** magazine, take a moment to consider the importance of political action. Please give serious consideration to making a contribution today! Thank-you.

<i>Shaun Abley</i>	<i>Gordon Cronk</i>	<i>Ken Hamilton</i>	<i>Jeffery Lysiak</i>	<i>Patrick A. Quirk</i>	<i>Jeremy Tima</i>
<i>Michael A. Abbott</i>	<i>David A. Craub</i>	<i>Jeffrey Hanna</i>	<i>Christopher A. Manczak</i>	<i>Martin Reddy</i>	<i>Mitchell Tokarski</i>
<i>Brian Anderson</i>	<i>Darryl Curtis</i>	<i>Thomas Hanson</i>	<i>TJ Manning</i>	<i>Thomas Reeber</i>	<i>Mark Toms</i>
<i>Mark Andraw</i>	<i>John B. Cashman</i>	<i>Pat Harder, JR</i>	<i>Marco Marcanioni</i>	<i>Trent Retschlag</i>	<i>Kevin Tomaszewski</i>
<i>Robert Arbini</i>	<i>Matthew P. Czarniecki</i>	<i>Damon Harney</i>	<i>Jesse E. Marcatte</i>	<i>Christopher Reynolds</i>	<i>Steven Trall</i>
<i>Kevin Arfl</i>	<i>Daniel Dagenais</i>	<i>Marc Hatfield</i>	<i>Brian E. Marquardt</i>	<i>Scott Rickard</i>	<i>Donald Truesdell</i>
<i>Charles Asber</i>	<i>Daniel Dave</i>	<i>Jon Hauger</i>	<i>Tim Marshall</i>	<i>Rodney Roberts</i>	<i>Mark R. Turo</i>
<i>Anthony Augugliaro</i>	<i>John E. DeBarr, III</i>	<i>Kevin Haukey</i>	<i>Corey Mates</i>	<i>Gerald Rodabaugh</i>	<i>Gordon Tuzinsky</i>
<i>Charles Baber</i>	<i>Jason Deneau</i>	<i>Steve Heim</i>	<i>Phillip M. Mautz</i>	<i>Douglas Rose</i>	<i>John Valensky</i>
<i>Vaskin Badalaw</i>	<i>William Demison</i>	<i>Fred Helfmann</i>	<i>John McCoy, JR</i>	<i>Keith Rouley</i>	<i>Patrick VanOverbeke</i>
<i>Michael Bailey</i>	<i>David Deslover</i>	<i>Matthew M. Hollinrake</i>	<i>Larry McGray</i>	<i>Terry Sabo</i>	<i>Jeremy Lee Verbeke</i>
<i>Darin Balinski</i>	<i>Donald C. Dettling</i>	<i>Paul Hood</i>	<i>James McCulloch</i>	<i>Nickolas Sage</i>	<i>Gordon C. Vogt, II</i>
<i>Richard Ballard</i>	<i>Mark D. Docherty</i>	<i>James Hosier</i>	<i>Patrick McIntosh</i>	<i>Matthew Sabr</i>	<i>Marc Volger</i>
<i>Graig Barker</i>	<i>Roberto F. Domenzain</i>	<i>Edward Hosmer</i>	<i>Ryan McMenemy</i>	<i>David Salerno</i>	<i>Seth Vukenich</i>
<i>Michael G. Barnhardt</i>	<i>Charles Donahue</i>	<i>Andrew Houde</i>	<i>Daniel F. McNamara</i>	<i>Barry Sawickas</i>	<i>Kurt Wagner</i>
<i>Dennis Barr</i>	<i>Jeff Drake</i>	<i>Paul Hufnagel</i>	<i>Brian McNeil</i>	<i>Douglas Sawitskie</i>	<i>Raymond Wagner</i>
<i>Keith Barthauer</i>	<i>John Drogchuk</i>	<i>Peter Hughes</i>	<i>Joseph Mendrysa</i>	<i>Glen Scaffidi</i>	<i>Scott Walsh</i>
<i>Stephen Biehl</i>	<i>Timothy J. Duncan</i>	<i>Brian James</i>	<i>Johnny Menzies</i>	<i>Jeremie R. Schneider</i>	<i>Lance Walters</i>
<i>Jeffrey Bloom</i>	<i>James Dundas</i>	<i>Robert Jennison</i>	<i>Brian Miencier</i>	<i>Mark Schofield</i>	<i>Greg A. Weschlar</i>
<i>Keith Bo</i>	<i>Gary Dust</i>	<i>Mark Karschnia</i>	<i>Jeffrey Milas</i>	<i>Matthew Schroeder</i>	<i>David Weisenberg</i>
<i>Michael F. Bobzin</i>	<i>Patrick J. DuVall</i>	<i>John Kasran</i>	<i>Timothy P. Miller</i>	<i>Carlyle Schultz</i>	<i>Thomas Webb</i>
<i>Benedict Borgiorno</i>	<i>Al Dyer, JR</i>	<i>Michael Kazae</i>	<i>John Mitchell</i>	<i>Dennis Schultz</i>	<i>Paul Wells</i>
<i>David Bostater</i>	<i>Timothy Eslein</i>	<i>Randall C. Keen</i>	<i>James Montgomery</i>	<i>John Schuwall</i>	<i>Kirk Werner</i>
<i>William Bounds</i>	<i>James Etzin</i>	<i>Brian Keene</i>	<i>Donald Morris</i>	<i>Bryan Schuessing</i>	<i>Kenneth Wheaton</i>
<i>Matt Brach</i>	<i>Jason Everest</i>	<i>Lewis Kempf</i>	<i>Jason P. Murray</i>	<i>Timothy A. Seal, JR</i>	<i>Christopher M. Wheeler</i>
<i>Edward Berman</i>	<i>Timothy Falk</i>	<i>Christopher Kenny</i>	<i>Michael Muscat</i>	<i>Patrick Sheehan</i>	<i>Barry White</i>
<i>Brenda Brasington</i>	<i>Bob Farver</i>	<i>Joseph Kinnucan</i>	<i>Patrick Nagel</i>	<i>Brendt Sheridan</i>	<i>Mickey Winkuna</i>
<i>Michael J. Brchl</i>	<i>Kurt Fechter</i>	<i>John E. Kirchhoff</i>	<i>Michael Navetta</i>	<i>Brian Siriani</i>	<i>David Wilbert</i>
<i>Kevin J. Brookshire, SR</i>	<i>Bryan Fathke</i>	<i>Michael Klein</i>	<i>Jeffrey Niemann</i>	<i>Brian Sleeza</i>	<i>Mark Willkie</i>
<i>Jerry Lee Burke, II</i>	<i>William Foster</i>	<i>Mark Koonter</i>	<i>Jeffrey Niemeyer</i>	<i>John Smithak</i>	<i>Paul Wilke</i>
<i>Timothy A. Burke</i>	<i>Bryan Fountain</i>	<i>David Kopf</i>	<i>Tim O'Connor</i>	<i>Eric L. Smith</i>	<i>William Wright</i>
<i>Adam J. Burton</i>	<i>Ronald Francis</i>	<i>Christopher Krotche</i>	<i>Michael Olderman</i>	<i>Paul Smith</i>	<i>David Wylie</i>
<i>Daniel Bush</i>	<i>William Frank</i>	<i>Mark Labelle</i>	<i>Fred Osborn</i>	<i>William E. Smith, JR</i>	<i>Matthew Wyszczelski</i>
<i>Chris Buzzelli</i>	<i>Benjamin J. Frantz</i>	<i>Jeff Lachowicz</i>	<i>Stephen Parsell</i>	<i>Kevin Snell</i>	<i>Gerald Youngblood, JR</i>
<i>Robert Caccia</i>	<i>Jeff Futrell</i>	<i>Carl Laubach</i>	<i>Daniel Paszkiewicz</i>	<i>Kyle Soyko</i>	<i>James Yuhus, JR</i>
<i>Timothy Callaban</i>	<i>Matthew Futrell</i>	<i>Daniel Lee</i>	<i>Mark Payar</i>	<i>Michael Springer</i>	<i>David Zurawski, JR</i>
<i>Douglas Calvert</i>	<i>Charles M. Gagnier</i>	<i>Anthony H. Lelo</i>	<i>Matt Peczynski</i>	<i>Andrew Stager</i>	
<i>James Carden</i>	<i>Larry Gambotto</i>	<i>John E. LeRoy</i>	<i>Robert Peterson</i>	<i>Darrell Stamper</i>	
<i>Nicholas Carignan</i>	<i>Leann Garner</i>	<i>Jim Lene</i>	<i>Aileen Pettinger</i>	<i>Matthew Sterling</i>	
<i>William Case</i>	<i>Tim Garner</i>	<i>Edward J. Lietz</i>	<i>Kennith Phinney, III</i>	<i>Brandon W. Stinnett</i>	
<i>Steve Cashion</i>	<i>Kevin Gilliam</i>	<i>Kentwood Local 3174</i>	<i>James Pietraz</i>	<i>Jeff Stoble</i>	
<i>Daniel Chadwick</i>	<i>Steven Giroux</i>	<i>Michael Longenecker</i>	<i>Kevin Piriot</i>	<i>Alan Stockavell</i>	
<i>John Chapman</i>	<i>Kenneth Grabowski</i>	<i>Robert S. Loring</i>	<i>Anthony M. Pizzini</i>	<i>Robert Stoddard</i>	
<i>Terrence H. Chesney</i>	<i>Dennis Grutopp</i>	<i>Adam Lozen</i>	<i>Jeffrey Podron</i>	<i>Michael Stradtner</i>	
<i>Keith Clancy</i>	<i>John Griffin</i>	<i>Scott Lucas</i>	<i>Mike Prinz</i>	<i>Anita Suleis</i>	
<i>Rogers E. Claussen, JR</i>	<i>Robert B. Haase</i>	<i>Mark Lueck</i>	<i>Larry Probaszka</i>	<i>Rodney Sweet</i>	
<i>Larry Cole</i>	<i>Philip Hall</i>	<i>Kristopher Lussenden</i>	<i>Gary Purdom</i>	<i>Craig Sylvestre</i>	
<i>Thomas R. Colombo</i>	<i>Randy Hall</i>	<i>Hurst M. Lyon IV</i>	<i>Walter Pyle</i>	<i>Bradley Tanner</i>	
<i>Thomas Cox</i>	<i>Robert M. Halston</i>	<i>Michael Lyons</i>	<i>Timothy Quaine</i>	<i>John Thiede</i>	

Your Union. Your Future.

It was my honor and pleasure to address the 49th Biennial Convention of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union in Detroit. The occasion, particularly the democratic transition of key leadership positions including the presidency and vice president positions, caused me to reflect upon what we do as a Union and how we get that job done. We were fortunate to have several qualified and experienced Union leaders competing for each of those positions; but I could not help but wonder whether we are taking the necessary steps to ensure that our resource pool of leadership talent remains sufficiently deep for the challenging future we face.

In January 2010, the Bureau of Labor Statistics released some sobering statistics regarding the health and character of the Union movement in the United States during 2009. In that year 7.9 million public sector employees were members of a Union. That number represents 37.4% of all public employees. Contrast those figures with the private sector where 7.4 million workers were members of a Union. In raw numbers, the figures are comparable; however, with nearly five times the number of employees working in the private sector compared with the public sector, Union membership in the private sector accounted for only 7.2% of all private sector employees. In the public sector, protective services (firefighters and police officers) showed the second highest level of Union organization, following only teachers and librarians. In light of these statistics, it is reasonable to conclude that not only does the future of public sector Unionism rest largely with us, but arguably the future of the entire labor movement turns upon what we as Unionized firefighters do. This realization gives rise to a heightened level of duty and responsibility in how we conduct ourselves as a Union. It is easy to see the importance of planning for not only the replenishment of the leadership of the Union as reflected in our recent elections, but for the building blocks of the future labor movement.

At the convention delegates heard a stir-

ring and timely address by IAFF General President Harold Shaitberger, who indicated that our Local Union presidents have the hardest job in the International Union. Three of the main reasons he cited for the difficulty of the Union president's job were: 1. Bargaining unit members consistently expect more, but lack an understanding of what it takes to get the job done. 2. Employers are being squeezed and want to exploit the current negative economic environment. 3. Public pressure is growing against our contractual benefit packages. These three friction points are a fine encapsulation of just what the Union's job is: 1. Service to members. 2. Bargaining with employers. 3. Public relations. Each of these areas of concern point to the need for the Union to invest its resources in the education and development of its members from the moment they join the Union.

Limitations on the space available for this article keep me from laying out the long history and sacrifices our leaders and members have made in generations past to accomplish the goal of building this Union and developing the legal and contractual rights we currently enjoy. Unfortunately, many of our new members have no labor culture to speak of. They do not necessarily come from backgrounds with strong labor traditions; and for some, they never considered that firefighters are organized into a Union, but just knew that firefighting is "a good job." Firefighting is a good job and this Union is a huge part of how it got to be such a good job. Lifetime members like Dan Delegato and Larry McCall can provide priceless and detailed information about how we got to where we are. Both men still attend district meetings and the MPFFU convention. If you are a new or relatively new member, you should ask your Union officers to bring you to a district meeting so that you can fill in some of the blanks. If you are a Union officer, you should require your newer members to accompany you to a district meeting as a means of beginning their educational journey into what this Union is and their role in it. But district meeting attendance and

MPFFU Legal Counsel
Michael L. O'Hearon
33680 Five Mile Rd.
Livonia, MI 48154
734.437.3073 (office)
734.437.9216 (fax)
mlohearon@hotmail.com



We need to be driven by the work that needs to be done; and that work cannot be done by a handful of elected Union officers. The future success of each Local, the MPFFU, the IAFF and the entire labor movement requires the participation and contribution of every Union member.

payment of initiation fees is not enough to secure our future success as Unionists or to motivate new members to become the active and contributing members we need them to be.

We need to be driven by the work that needs to be done; and that work cannot be done by a handful of elected Union officers. The future success of each Local, the MPFFU, the IAFF and the entire labor movement requires the participation and contribution of every Union member. Every member of the Union should serve on at least one committee. If every member did so, the need for any member to serve on multiple committees would be quite minimal. Important work needs to be done at the Local level. Some common appointments available in every Local include serving as a Union steward, serving on the bargaining committee or serving on the safety committee. Revising and maintaining the Union's constitution and by-laws, researching and monitoring safety issues and researching bargaining issues and proposals are duties that are nearly constantly being carried out within the committee

MPFFU LEGAL COUNSEL

structure. Having all members involved allows membership on each committee to rotate so that no one member or group of members feels burdened by the long-term responsibility for the same task.

Members who prefer not to get so involved in the nuts and bolts of Union business have equally valuable options available to them. Political action is an increasing tool necessary in carrying out the Union's goals for its members. There are opportunities for members to engage in direct political outreach to local and state politicians who are responsible for making the decisions which impact our ability to secure our wages and benefits. The ability to persuade these decision makers often is affected by the perception of the public's opinion. Members who choose not to do Local Union work or political action can opt for community outreach projects. Charity work, such as the MDA Fill the Boot campaign, Toys for Tots, or Christmas drives are all excellent methods of bringing the Union out into the community and showing our commitment to the citizens we serve. Projects such as the purchase and installation of smoke detectors in the homes of seniors or low-income families are a way of tying the project to the firefighting service. All of these endeavors increase the Union's visibility in the community and show the Union and its members to be making vital contributions to the quality of life of the citizens in the community. When citizens know you as people and

benefit from your time and attention, they are less susceptible to your employer's assertions that we are trying to "line our pockets with taxpayer money" or trying to manipulate the system to create "jackpot pensions." Instead, they are much more likely to come to our aid and assistance when we lobby and rally to pass millages or bond issues or engage in direct actions to try to save jobs and avoid layoffs. Someone needs to do all of this work. In the course of doing it, members discover what true Unionism is and are encouraged to participate more.

Members who actively participate are more likely to be open to serving as Union officers, when they come to know intimately how the work gets done and the value and rewards that result. Our Local Union officers have a strong history of involvement and service to the MPFFU and the I.A.F.F. as verified by the interest and participation in the recent MPFFU elections and the election of Paul Hufnagel as 8th District Vice President of the I.A.F.F. If you speak with anyone who recently ran for or was elected to a Union office, they will confirm that it was their experiences at each of the previously mentioned levels of participation which gave them the knowledge, experience and the desire to serve as a Union officer.

The future holds many new and uncharted challenges for the labor movement and for this Union. It will be vitally important to reach out to other Unions in solidar-

ity if we are to prevail and be successful. I encourage Local Union leaders to create and participate in municipal labor councils made up of all of the Unions representing employees working for your employer. This would include the police, clericals, public works, and any other represented employees in your municipality and bring together Unions as disparate as IAFF, POAM, COAM, Teamsters, UAW, AFSCME etc. Such labor councils have achieved success among workers in higher education and can work for us as well. Collaboration with our brothers and sisters in other Unions sharing a common employer enable us to know what the employer is saying in other contexts. Sharing of information is effective against the "divide and conquer" strategies that so many employers use against us and decreases the likelihood that one Union will agree to terms which are directly detrimental to another Union. In that regard, municipal labor councils enable us to educate non-312 bargaining units about the strategic advantages for them if they are patient in waiting until 312 units come to contract terms. In unity there is strength.

Conventions always cause one to reflect. However, they are primarily designed to facilitate planning for the future. In the wake of your convention, I ask you to reflect upon the road we have already traveled, plan for the uncertain times ahead, and do your part to build your Union in accordance with your plan. It is, after all, your Union and your future. ●



Together we can be STRONG!

HOT NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS

1st/3rd District

First/Third District VP

Chris Reynolds

1502 Michigan Ave.
Bay City, MI 48708-8773
989.225.2982 (cell)
989.894.2263 (station)
cray8242@msu.com



Greetings to the members of the newly created 1st/3rd District and to all members of the MPPFU. It's been a very busy summer this year. It's also been a dangerous one. On behalf of the members from the 1st/3rd District I'd like to begin this article by offering our thoughts, prayers, and best wishes to our brothers from Detroit L-344 and Flint L-352. Both locals had members seriously injured this past August doing their jobs. In fact, as you are reading this, some of those members will still be hospitalized or still recovering at home. Here's hoping they can ALL get back on the rigs soon!

But despite all the bad news we are hearing these days there has been some good news scattered around the district. Flint L-352 and Bay City L-116 have both been awarded SAFER Grants. By now I'm sure most of you have heard that over the last several months (since the most recent round of layoffs in March) our brothers and sisters from Flint have been through hell. FEMA awarded the city \$6.7 million which allows for 39 positions. This has not only brought their laid off members back to work, but it will actually force the city of Flint to hire new firefighters! Hopefully, this will bring some much needed relief. Our brothers in Bay City were awarded \$880,000 which equates to five positions. While six of their members were on layoff status, there have been some recent retirements and it is expected that all six members will be back to work soon. On the political front, our brothers and sisters from Saginaw L-102 were successful in their fight to renew their Public Safety Millage. It was expected that if this millage renewal failed that Saginaw would have to lay off approximately 27 firefighters!

And in Owosso, L-504 appears to have temporarily avoided the elimination of

their ALS transporting service from a misguided city council. The local was very proactive in their opposition to this. From the first day, when there was news that the council was considering eliminating ALS transport (and eliminating all full-time staff), the local went into action and launched an aggressive public relations campaign to gather the public's support. And as a result of their hard work these issues have been taken off the table, albeit temporarily. Those are just a few recent examples of successful political action.

And with election season upon us it's time for each and every one of you to get active. Know the issues, get to know the candidates, and if you have questions regarding a particular issue or candidate then ask someone. There are several important statewide races to get involved in. In order for us to protect what we have spent decades fighting for we are going to need friends in the legislature. The current anti-incumbent sentiment out there makes our job only that much tougher. It's very simple, public employees are under attack!!! PA 312, Right to Work, pensions, mergers and consolidations, and healthcare are all being scrutinized (and attacked) in Lansing as we speak. On top of that you're constantly being asked to come to the table and make unrealistic concessions. I applaud those of you that went to the table and negotiated concessions in the interest of saving jobs, but this attack on public employees has got to stop! And the only way that happens is to ensure we have friends of firefighters in Lansing watching our backs. If we don't, you, the public employee will continue being blamed for the state of Michigan's economy. Our employers are going to keep demanding that we give up more and in a few years you'll be lucky if you will be able to afford to retire! So next time you are talking with your local president ask them what you can do to help. Get involved!!

Changing gears now for some thank you's and congratulations. Congratulations to IAFF 8th District VP Paul Hufnagel for being awarded President Emeritus within the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union at our convention this past May. It was an honor and a privilege to serve with him and there isn't anyone more deserving

of this recognition. Also, congratulations to former 1st District VP Kevin Pirlot on being awarded Lifetime Membership within the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union. I understand I have some big shoes to fill when it comes to representing our brothers and sisters from the U.P. The 1st District has been well represented these past eight years. Brother Pirlot is a great trade unionist and a good friend. I am proud to have had the opportunity to serve with him.

Finally, and it is with great sincerity, I say thank you to the members of the 1st and 3rd Districts for electing me to serve as your district VP for two more years. I am honored and humbled by your trust in me to be your representative and this is something I will never take lightly. I hope you and your families had a fantastic summer. ●

2nd District

2nd District VP

Shaun Abbey

8116 Oldfield Ct. SE
Byron Center, MI 49315
616.541.7117 (home)
616.299.5474 (cell)
shaunabbey@sxgkbbol.net



I would like to start by thanking Detroit L-344 for hosting a great convention. It is always nice to see so many friends from around the state. The MGM offered an amazing venue for business and pleasure. I am glad the membership voted to give the resources to the MPFFU so we can continue to work diligently, on your behalf, in Lansing and across the state. I know a lot of members were wondering why these resolutions passed without much fanfare. I believe so many of us are fighting for resources with our employers that we feel hypocritical if we don't take care of our union when it needs resources. We took care of a lot of business during the day and had a lot of fun into the night. I look forward to the next convention in Lansing two years from now.

The fight continues to be in Lansing. This next election cycle will be very interesting. Your MPFFU Executive Board will

HOT NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS

continue to push our issues at the Capitol. This includes defending the rights we have fought for, while fighting to get you more. Please remember to contribute to MPFFU FirePAC. We need money to fund our friends and defeat our enemies. The fact that cancer presumption still sits in a committee, while our members die, is an embarrassment to the Senate and Senators Bishop and Allen. This is exactly what is wrong in Lansing. We have the votes to get it passed in both chambers and signed by Governor Granholm. Instead, partisan politics locks it away in a committee while the families of our fallen suffer. It's a disgrace. If this pisses you off, make the calls, cast the votes and donate the money. This is how we change Lansing. With term limits, we need PAC money now more than ever. There are more races and that means more money.

Around the Second District...

The Second District is having the same issues as the rest of the state...no money. Many locals are fighting off cuts and layoffs. Almost every Local has been asked to take concessions of some type. We continue to get hammered by politicians that we need to make the same as the private sector. Funny, they were not singing this tune 10 years ago and they won't after we recover either. How many of you have received a \$10k bonus because you had a small fire loss in your district last year? Me either. Grand Rapids and Muskegon area communities continue to look at consolidation. These talks are just that at this point, talks. What the politicians that are pushing these mergers don't realize is that we are all understaffed already. They blame the "union" for holding up the process. The fact is, that they are finally looking at the numbers and realizing that, in most cases, they will have to hire more people, not cut people. This offers no solution to their problem (money) so they are not proceeding. Grand Rapids L-366, Plainfield Twp. L-3890 and Muskegon Heights L-615 have been awarded SAFER grants. L-366 and L-615 are both bringing back members on lay off and hiring new firefighters. Kentwood L-3174, Grand Rapids, L-366 and Wyoming L-2758 all passed tax initiatives in

May. All members that are laid off will be brought back and no more cuts will be made at this time. Kentwood brought back a Fire Inspector that had been demoted. Wyoming lost a fire prevention position that is not being replaced at this time. Norton Shores L-2559 is losing three members due to layoffs. One member is also retiring, so they will be down four members. Holland L-759 continues to fight to keep jobs and their work. The city is proceeding with a public safety director model. They are looking for creative ways to provide fire and EMS. Despite this, the commission did raise the tax rate on their own to prevent layoffs at this time. Manistee L-645 is having all of the same issues. Their President, Timm Smith, is being asked to be the interim Chief. They are working through this. Muskegon Twp. L-4132 had a member leave and the Township has hired a replacement. Fruitport Twp. L-2352 is working on getting a millage passed in November. It got voted down in August due to poor ballot language. The Township has told them that there may be layoffs if it does not pass. I have highlighted some of the good and the bad around the Second, however, every Local is fighting every day to protect their members. To all of the members of the Second District; thanks for your support and keep up the good work.

I would like to thank Paul Hufnagel, Dan McNamara and Kevin Pirlot for the many years of service you have all given the MPFFU. You are all strong trade unionist that have pushed our profession and union to where we are today. Many do not realize, but I do, that without people like you, we would not enjoy the kind of lifestyle that MPFFU firefighters have today. I know you will all continue to be leaders in different union roles. Thanks for what you have done in the past and good luck in the future. I would also like to congratulate Mark Docherty, Dan Dawe and Steve Heim on their elections. I look forward to working with all of you on the board.

In closing, I want to remind everyone why we fight so hard for the rights and benefits we have. It is to have a decent, respectable quality of life. Remember to vote in November. We need friends in Lansing and Washington to protect that way of life. ●

4th District

4th District VP

Steven Heim

1651 Kingsway Court, Suite E

Trenton, MI 48183-1959

313.468.3643 (home/cell)

313.382.1755 (fax)

313.381.1975 (station)

stevenheim@hotmail.com



As I start my first article for the magazine, I would be remiss if I didn't begin by thanking this great union for the opportunity to serve as 4th District VP. It was only with the support of so many of my brothers and sisters that I had the courage to run and it was certainly their hardwork and dedication that allowed me to be elected to this position.

I want to thank the firefighters from *Dearborn, Westland, Wyandotte, Southgate, Ecorse, River Rouge and Lincoln Park* for their early endorsements and encouragement throughout the entire process. I would like to thank Mickey Wiewiura for really making the election a great experience. Many witnessed our fierce rivalry, as we drank beer with one another after every function, ate together and talked throughout the convention. Mickey you were a real gentleman and true union brother throughout the entire process. Thank you.

Lastly, I would like to thank Dan McNamara. Not only for the last decade that he served as 4th District Vice President, as my Vice President, but for the advice and mentoring that Brother McNamara gave me personally through all the years. Dan's vast experience, unquestionable dedication to firefighters, and personal integrity has given us all an example to strive for. Thank you on behalf of the 4th District, the Lincoln Park Fire Fighters and myself for your continuous service and friendship.

Stepping Up

With Michigan's economy in turmoil it is obvious to everyone working for a municipality, county, or state that we are in for some tremendously tough times. For some of us the tough times have already been around for way too long. The members of the 4th District are certainly no strangers to

Continued on next page ➤

HOT NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS

concessions, threats on staffing, or politicians crying broke. However these truly are unprecedented times.

Unlike years past there is truly an assault on every local and unlike the past these threats are backed by public support and anti union sentiment. These are the times when being in a Union has never been more important. But, as I talk with many of our locals it seems we have a wide spread problem with union participation and an even greater shortage of members taking leadership roles. With all the challenges looming on the horizon this has to change, if we are going to survive.

In these tough times it is necessary for us to take a tougher look at ourselves and make an honest assessment of how prepared we are for the fight that lies in front of us. Each local should evaluate its mentoring program or for many create a mentoring program that can address the individual needs of each local. This has to be a time to eliminate barriers that exist between different groups in each department, a time for the older guys to spend extra time with the young guys, or the paramedics with the EMTs or whatever crazy divisions that are keeping us from being united. The phrase "UNITED WE BARGAIN, DIVIDED WE BEG" has never been more appropriate.

We need to emphasize to all of our members and remind ourselves that being a professional firefighter means much more than having a license plate and wearing 100 Maltese crosses. It means working harder and being better prepared than anyone else. It means we stick together no matter how tough it gets. It also means that when a gap is created when another leader moves on, someone else steps forward. We need members at every level of the organization to step up and prepare for the hardest fight we have ever seen.

We Stand Committed

I feel extremely confident that our President and entire executive board truly understand the difficulties ahead and are prepared to move aggressively to ensure the protection of our members. I feel extremely honored to be working with them on the behalf of our great district and stand committed to work with you through these tough times. ●

5th District

5th District VP

W. James Leve

10016 West J Avenue

Kalamazoo, MI 49009

269.375.9301 (home)

269.375.2551 (fax)

269.720.8499 (cell)

ntffiap5@aol.com



Congratulations to Paul Hufnagel on his election as 8th District Vice President of the IAFF. His union knowledge and legislative expertise will be missed, but having him as our District VP will surely help our locals in Michigan while he serves the International. I served under Paul throughout his presidency with the state and learned a great deal from him. Thanks Paul for all your hard work and everything you taught me.

I also want to welcome Mark Docherty and congratulate him as he begins his presidency for the State Union and to Steve and Dan after their wins in the 4th and 6th Districts. I know they will be great assets to our executive board.

The next two years are going to be very hard on not only the E-Board but also many locals facing hard economic times in the state. Already we have had to face layoffs and concessions mid contract like we have not had before. Municipalities are using the hard times to threaten locals with layoffs or PSO if they don't get what they want. In Jackson, the city manager, who is their ex-manager and makes \$100,000 annually plus getting two pensions, has decided that the City of Jackson does not need three fire stations and that they need to reduce spending. He hopes to close two stations and move all firefighters to one central station. Rumor has it by doing some members will retire and the city won't replace them. The other rumor is that he may try to get the city to go to a public safety department. The city charter calls for separate police and fire departments, but he may go for a charter amendment to change that. If that occurs how long will it be before he tries to make a county wide PSO department. Since Leoni and Blackman Townships are PSO that is not a stretch to

It has never been a more important time to get politically involved and elect those who will protect what we have fought so hard to get.

think that is what he has in mind. The only other department would be Summit Township. Both locals are keeping a watchful eye to stop this from happening. Your help may be needed in the future for assistance in these communities when called upon.

Another target for municipalities is retirees' health insurance benefits. Although pensions are protected by law, retirees' health benefits are not. Already we have seen members retire with good benefits only to have them reduced or cut well after they have left the service. How is it that a member works his whole career for a department and then retires thinking he has insurance to cover him and his family then losses those benefits of they are greatly reduced? I doubt any of the managers, mayors or councils that are making those decisions have their benefits reduced or lost. We have seen many cases where municipalities have the resources, but are "getting on the bandwagon" to make the cuts because they can. It has never been a more important time to get politically involved and elect those who will protect what we have fought so hard to get. People seem to forget that we didn't get these benefits overnight. We worked for these over the years with collective bargaining in good faith to get where we are and it's a shame we have to explain ourselves and justify what we have earned over and over again.

We have to think of different ways to protect what we have when management comes to us for ways to cut costs. Many locals have been taking wage freezes to avert layoffs and the like. Others have opted to using furlough days to reduce costs. A benefit of furlough days vs. wage freezes is that furlough days are usually a short term or maybe a one time cost whereas a wage freeze is forever. Each and every concession must be considered carefully before making a decision. ●

HOT NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS

6th District

6th District VP

Daniel Dawe

1651 Kingsway Court, Suite E

Trenton, MI 48183-1959

248.227.8055 (cell)

248.409.1531 (station)

517.545.1280 (fax)

kdj11721@sbxgkbbd.net



I'd like to begin by saying that I'm proud to serve the locals of the 6th District. I look forward to the opportunity to not only work with you and provide you with the information and assistance you need, but also the opportunity to learn from your experiences. Also, on a slightly more personal note, I would like to thank everyone for their thoughts and prayers for Tracie. She is doing well, and back to work on light duty, with a good prognosis to go back to full active duty.

As you are all aware, we are currently living and working in difficult economic

times. Most, if not all, of us are facing shrinking budgets. Many of us have seen, or are facing, staff reductions, whether as a result of attrition through retirement, proposed or threatened layoffs, or actual layoffs. Some of us have seen apparatus and station closures. Many are seeking not only millage renewals, but millage increases, to help offset reduced property taxes due to lower property values. And some are even facing the threat of becoming public safety departments.

I don't believe there is one of us who has experienced all of these things. That is why it is so important now, more than ever, that we all work together; to provide each other with information we all can use to help sustain us through this economic downturn. Some of us are experienced executive board members, some are rookie firefighters not only new to the MPFFU and IAFF, but also new to unionism. For those who are new, ask questions, seek out information and learn from the experience more senior members have to offer. For

those who have been a part of this organization for a while, listen to the ideas of our younger members, they provide a different perspective that may not have been considered, or that we may have forgotten about. Most importantly, we all need to work together, or we all risk failing together.

Not only must we work together within our locals, we must also be willing to reach out to other locals and both ask for, and provide, information to each other. To paraphrase John Donne, "No local is an island..." From the largest local to the smallest, we each have insights, ideas, and experiences that will apply to the issues each of us are now facing.

So, with these thoughts in mind, again, I look forward to working with all of the locals in the 6th District. I am eager to provide ideas and assistance for those who would be interested from my experiences, and I also look forward to hearing about the ideas and strategies that have worked for you, so that they can be shared with other locals experiencing similar problems. ●

PROTECT TOMORROW WHAT YOU'VE EARNED TODAY.



Is Your Pension Protected?



At the MPFFU, we know that our firefighters are some of the best trained and skilled individuals in the profession. We also know that you have worked hard to support and build a solid foundation for your future. And while your jobs potentially put you at risk every day, are you aware of the hidden risks to your financial future? Many people overlook the threat of diminishing pensions and savings due to future need for care at home or other **Long Term Care** assistance. It is estimated that more than 50% of people will need services of this nature, with an average cost of care being nearly \$3,000 per month. Because of this, the MPFFU is pleased to offer a discounted **Long Term Care** Insurance solution to help you and your families avoid this very real hazard.

Call Maria Marcovechio Today! (800) 278-6013 x4
www.personalizedplanningconcepts.com



Ask me about H.E.L.P.S plan through the IAFF. Tax free dollars up to \$3,000 to pay for LTC!

MPFFU 49th Biennial Convention

The 49th Biennial Convention of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union was held on May 5-6-7, 2010 at the MGM Grand Hotel in Detroit.

Two hundred and eleven (211) delegates, fifty-nine (59) alternates, and 148 guests attended the Convention.

Elections were held for two-year terms for all positions.

President

164 – **Mark Docherty**

117 – Daniel McNamara

4th District Vice President

53 – **Steven Heim**

25 – Mickey Wiewiura

6th District Vice President

46 – **Daniel Dawe**

27 – Scott Halleck

The following individuals were elected by acclamation:

- Secretary-Treasurer: **Terrence Chesney**
- 2nd District VP: **Shaun Abbey**
- 3rd District VP: **Chris Reynolds**
- 5th District VP: **Jim Leve**
- Eastern Trustee: **Edward Hosmer**
- Western Trustee: **David Weisenberg**
- Northern Trustee: **Aileen Pettinger**

Past President **Paul Hufnagel** was granted President Emeritus Status.

Kevin Pirlot was granted Lifetime Membership Status.

Delegates approved resolutions that will increase the monthly per capita for the MPFFU to **\$11.08 on July 1, 2010**.

Delegates approved a resolution that will decrease the number of MPFFU District Vice Presidents from six to five. The Third District and the First District will be represented by the same District Vice President on the MPFFU Executive Board.

Delegates took action on 17 Resolutions. Additionally, two resolutions were withdrawn and one resolution was rejected by the Resolutions Committee because it did not meet the requirements for submission of a late resolution. Prior to adjournment, two additional late resolutions were accepted by the convention floor and adopted. A copy of each of the final resolutions in their entirety will soon be available for viewing on the MPFFU website.

Lansing – Local 421 was the only local from the 5th District to submit a bid to host the 2012 MPFFU Convention. The Convention will be held at the Lansing Radisson Hotel and the Lansing Convention Center. The dates of the 2012 are May 2-3-4, 2012.

Delegates also heard the remarks and presentations of several guest speakers throughout the course of the convention:

- The Honorable Dave Bing, Mayor – City of Detroit
- The Honorable Charles Pugh, Council President – City of Detroit
- Harold Schaitberger, General President - IAFF
- Thomas Miller, General Secretary-Treasurer – IAFF



- Paul Hufnagel, 8th District Vice President – IAFF
- The Honorable Andy Dillon - State Representative & Speaker of the House
- The Honorable Jennifer Haase – State Representative
- The Honorable Bert Johnson – State Representative
- The Honorable Virgil Bernero – Mayor of the City of Lansing
- Melissa Yutzey, Kelley-Cawthorne
- Ron Farr, State Fire Marshal & Director-Bureau of Fire Services
- Leon LaBrecque, Labrecque, Jackson, Price, & Roehl, LLC
- Michael O'Hearon, MPFFU General Counsel
- Mark Munger – IAFF Financial Corporation
- John Piper, Nationwide
- Michelle Damstra - Muscular Dystrophy Association

The Honorable Senator Michael Prusi was scheduled to receive the "Presidents Award for Outstanding Legislative Service" but he was unable to attend the Convention.

The Detroit Fire Department Honor Guard opened the convention. Karen Newman sang the national Anthem. Detroit Fire Department Chaplin Reverend McNeely gave the invocation.

Fifty-seven MPFFU members served on various Convention Committees which were integral to making this Convention a great success.

The Convention Staff of Ed Rigley, Michelle Chesney, Laura Jensen, and Darcy Moore worked diligently behind the scenes to make sure everything got done in a professional and timely fashion.

A complete verbatim transcript of the entire convention will soon be file at the MPFFU Office and it will be available for review upon request. ●

Speakers



Business at...



...the Convention



What a...



...Group!



Sponsors & Exhibitions



Committees



Message from the Michigan AFL-CIO

*By Mark T. Gaffney, President
Michigan State AFL-CIO
AUGUST 17, 2010*

In this time of oil spills, mining deaths, frustration with politics and financial corporations that ruin the economy, the public's trust in institutions is at an all time low. Recently, our AFL-CIO focus groups and research showed that most people trust unions, however, to have a positive impact at workplace health and safety. That makes sense. Many non-union workers fear that raising concerns about working-place safety could get them in trouble with the boss or fired. Today, most American workers are working longer hours, even those who operate machinery or drive for a living. Their resulting fatigue can be dangerous but to keep their job, workers feel they have no choice, but to sometimes work unsafe.

Unions and their members, their employer partners and their safety committees spend a great deal of time and effort insuring safe work places. Our member's lives are important and we think it makes good economic sense for the employers. But some non-union companies do not see safety as being as important and they take advantage of their workers and will put their workers in harm's way. Consider the case of the Deepwater Horizon Drilling Rig which caused the BP oil spill. The corporate culture of BP, Transocean and Halliburton, the companies involved in the explosion and spill, is very anti-union. I know. I worked there in the gulf oil fields years ago. I saw unsafe work practices in this non-union environment firsthand.

Gulf operations and this deepwater drilling rig avoid all kinds of regulation and scrutiny that an on-site union safety and health committee or expert could provide. The now exploded rig was registered in the Marshall Islands (population 62,000) instead of being a U. S. operation subject to safety regulations. The rig also avoided

OSHA regulations, the nation's health and safety rules for worksites, because OSHA only extends to a three-nautical mile limit in the gulf!

Something should have been done on the BP rig after the first two fire balls shot up the pipeline in the days before the explosion which were a true indication the rig had become unsafe. A union steward could have contacted their company counterpart or a health and safety representative (depending on the union contract) could have temporarily stopped the job when tests showed the pipeline pressure had exceeded safe standards. But the workers did not have a strong enough voice and, no union backing, to raise those concerns.

The result? Eleven workers, in their twenties and thirties, with families and futures, killed. There were 17 other rig workers who were badly injured, many of them burned or maimed. Without a strong and effective voice for safety on this job, BP's bad corporate practices prevailed. The point is that the BP Corporation has a history of poor safety practices that must be recognized. After a 2005 refinery explosion that killed 17 and injured 150 workers, the U. S. Chemical Safety Board said that BP's "combination of cost cutting, production pressures and failure to invest caused a progressive deterioration of safety at the refinery". The report criticized BP's culture of bad management and failure to recognize and correct problems. This company's facilities needed proper and powerful safety committees with teeth and BP's workers everywhere need a union for their protection.

In fact, it's probably true that all of BP's facilities need far more attention from their workers towards job safety. Of the over 4,000 government complaints per year (more than ten (10) every day), about unsafe operations in the Gulf of Mexico, over 10% go to BP. In other words, BP is cited for safety violations on average, every

single day. It's non-union workers deserve better.

The same is true in the coal mining industry. The 29 miners killed underground in April of this year, at the Massey Company's Big Branch Mine did not have a union. According to statements by miners who survived, they were afraid they would be fired if they raised safety concerns. Last year, of the 48 miners killed in America in 2009, only one was a union worker; all the other 47 had little or no safety representation.

Massey Coal Company's CEO said, "We don't pay much attention to the (safety) violation count." It certainly seems so; Massey Companies had been cited for more than 3,000 violations since 1995, including 500 violations last year. The company's fines for safety violations are not a deterrent at less than \$170,000 annually for a \$2.3 billion dollar business; they are just another small cost, about the cost of employing two miners.

It's not just oil rigs and coal mines. Unfortunately, too many employers across America exhibit the same attitudes. The result, 5214 work site deaths last year.

The government alone cannot keep all workers safe. OSHA's enforcement budget was deeply cut under George Bush. Even with recent budget increases, the OSHA staff is currently 450 less than in 1980, even though our country's workforce has grown by 40%. There are now so few inspectors they could only get to all America's worksites an average of once in 137 years!

American workers, even those not organized, need unions for many reasons. One of the most critical is so more workers can successfully return home at the end of each workday.

The research that shows the general public understands that unions provide safer workplaces is important in our country where 14 workers on average, die on the job every day. ●

Now more than ever, nation needs healthy unions

By Marick Masters

Unions are in decline. With just slightly more than 7% of the private sector unionized, the rate of membership is at record lows.

Even in the public sector, where unions represent more than a third of the workforce, the rate seems to have peaked. Only about 10% of the union workers in America toil in manufacturing, manifesting our eviscerated industrial base.

A less than silent chorus of approbation greets the dire straits of unions. Labor-bashing is in vogue. We blame unions for critical ailments and disruptive changes, from the shuttering of manufacturers to rising public debt.

Our solution to these problems: Invite more imports, close more plants, cut wages, reduce benefits and discard guaranteed pensions. Companies declare bankruptcy to breach contracts—a process euphemistically called restructuring—and leave workers and retirees to fend for themselves.

In short, we solve problems by lowering our standard of living for working people—hardly the American Dream. Where are our core values as a society when we nonchalantly tolerate the demise of manufacturing, exodus of jobs, widening

gulf between the rich and poor, and shrinking middle America?

We need unions today more than ever before precisely because they are declining. Labor is one of the few institutions that unashamedly stands up for American manufacturing, calls out unfair practices on the part of our trading “partners,” and advocates expanding and broadening the distribution of wealth. We need unions because they are powerful political and social assimilators and engines of economic progress.

They are also guarantors of capitalist democracies and national security. Let us not forget that it was Walter Reuther who raised the bar for America to be the arsenal of democracy before our entry into World War II when he proposed Labor’s Plan for auto workers to produce 500 planes a day. The privileged few do not make a great country, win wars or build strong communities. For that, we need a vibrant middle class.

Unions give workers a real voice in the workplace—one that is consequential and, with wise management, heard. They offer an alternative to exiting or quitting.

This voice is far different from the lone cry for help, the whistleblower who exposes

criminality or the chronic complainer. The union voice is the institutionally safeguarded mechanism for promoting better working conditions and managerial practices to raise productivity and improve the quality of customer service, be the customer a passenger or a patient.

Somehow we have reached the point of confusing managerial authority and discretion with wisdom or soundness of judgment. In working people lies the intellectual capacity to get things done efficiently and effectively. Unions channel that capacity through negotiations. Executives, who too often do not listen, do not have a monopoly on how best to get things done.

Labor’s objective is not to drive business out of business or to soak the rich, but rather to generate more wealth that can be broadly shared. It is to expand a middle class capable of caring for itself, buying a house, educating its children, and living its years of retirement in dignity, not poverty.

Labor is about fulfilling the American Dream, not abandoning it.

Marick Masters is the director of Labor@Wayne, a labor research center at Wayne State University, and a business professor at WSU. ●



2010 IAFF/MDA National Firefighter Softball Champions

The Detroit Metro Firefighters softball team captured yet another National Championship this past weekend in Bowie, Maryland. This is their 3rd championship to go along with a runner-up finish in the past eight years.

The team is comprised of professional firefighters from the Detroit Metro area, who play in the "Masters Division" (40 years or older) for the National Championship. Throughout the year they sharpen their skills by playing in "open" format tournament against players of any age. The strategy seems to work out perfect for this team.

The 37th tournament, sponsored by the Prince George's County Professional Firefighters, also doubles as one of the largest fundraisers for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, and has raised over a million dollars throughout the years.

The guys from the Motor City wasted no time in getting off to a great start in their first game against the Providence, Rhode Island firefighters, pounding them for 22 runs in the first inning enroute to a 38-6 win in just 3 innings. It was the most lopsided loss in their team history.

The next game would provide a better test as the Houston, Texas firefighters played a great game, and wouldn't give up. But steady



hitting and some outstanding defense carried Detroit to a convincing 17-11 win.

The always strong and dangerous team from New York City was expected to be the toughest game of the tournament. Nobody expected what happened next, as Detroit pounded New York from the start, and never let up. This game too ended after just 3 innings with Detroit handing New York their worst loss in recent memory 22-1.

Detroit Metro and Florida Combined were the last two undefeated teams left in the tournament, and scheduled to play on Sunday, but heavy rains rolled through the Chesapeake Bay area, cancelling the remaining games of the tournament. The

tournament staff would name both teams National Champions.

The team is sponsored by leading property restoration company BELFOR, USA. The team is managed by Denny Hughes (Farmington Hills) and coached by Tim Prokop (Dearborn), and Keith Lampear (Birmingham). Players include Pat O'Dowd, Russ Zarras, Randy Gibson, Pat Wilson, Ron Goss, Jim Nadolski (Detroit); Ray DeWalt (Hazel Park); Dan Cipolla (Dearborn); Mike Albo (Southfield) and Benny Lampton (Louisville, KY). Joey Lora (Prince George's County, MD) served as the teams honorary Captain. ●

River Rouge Local 517 in the movies!

River Rouge firefighters had the opportunity to be extras in a movie that was being shot in River Rouge. They spent the day with Martin Sheen and Topher Grace doing walk thru parts. Included in the picture are (L to R): Lt. Donahue, Sgt. Woods, Sgt. VanAuken, P/M Abair, Martin Sheen, Sgt. Dotson, Topher Grace, Capt. Follbaum, ambulance extra and Lt. Savitskie.





MPFFU

1651 Kingsway Ct., Suite E
Trenton, MI 48183
734.675.0206 (office)
734.675.6083 (fax)

Please urge your families
and friends to vote for
the MPFFU endorsed
candidates on
November 2, 2010