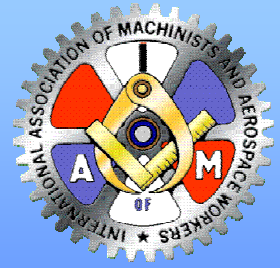


# LL839 Machinists Matters



3917 E MacArthur Rd.  
Wichita, KS. 67210

A Publication for "The Fighting Machinists" Representing the Workers of Spirit AeroSystems

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## President's Corner February 2012

By Kathy Petersen

African Americans and Labor Unions:  
The Good, the Bad & the Ugly

In observance of Black History Month, I thought it would be interesting to take a look at how African Americans contributed to the formation and success of labor unions. I have written many times about the sacrifices made by early union leaders, and it is important to understand that African Americans played a huge part in the unionization of this country. I learned some things that were unpleasant, some that were shameful, but also some things that were inspiring. We cannot change what happened in the past, but the decisions we make now can change the future of our union and the future of America.

Prior to the Civil War, African Americans played a role in labor actions. In the 1830s many free blacks were employed by shipyards in Baltimore, Maryland. They also employed slaves (including Frederick Douglass) who were leased to shipyard owners. In 1838 African-American workers formed the Caulkers Association, one of the first black trade unions in the U.S. This was a true union with collective bargaining rights, and it made significant gains for its members, including good wages and working conditions. In the late 1850s, the caulkers were being paid \$1.75 per day, which was more than many white workers earned in similar trades. In 1858 riots were instigated against black workers and shipyard owners began to refuse to hire black caulkers. In 1865 white workers staged a successful strike that forced shipyards to dismiss African Americans, and more than 1,000 workers lost their jobs. In 1869, 214

African-American delegates created the Colored National Labor Union (CNLU) with Isaac Myers as its president. Myers had worked as a caulker since the age of 16, and he organized fellow black shipyard workers into a successful cooperative after their employers fired them. The cooperative ultimately purchased its own shipyard. In 1872 Frederick Douglass became head of the CNLU. The CNLU encouraged cooperation among all workers, regardless of race or gender. The CNLU only lasted a few years, but the Knights of Labor, the largest union of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, pursued a similar vision of a united working class.

During the railroad industry's Great Strike of 1877, rallies and marches in St. Louis, Louisville and other cities brought together white and black workers in support of the common rights of workers. But by 1894, in a strike against the Pullman Company, Eugene Debs (leader of the American Railway Union) was unable to convince members of his union to accept black railroaders. The Pullman Company then hired black workers as strike-breakers. Of course, Pullman paid the black workers lower wages, so nobody really benefitted except Pullman.

In 1909 white employees of the Georgia Railroad (represented by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen) walked off their jobs, demanding that lower-paid black firemen be replaced by higher-paid whites. A Federal Board of Arbitration, appointed under the provisions of the Erdman Act of 1898, ruled two to one against the Brotherhood, stating that black workers had to be paid equal pay for equal work, thereby eliminating the financial advantage of hiring blacks.

Between 1916-1930 more than one million blacks moved from the south to the north in search of better lives. The move north began as an opportunity

*Presidents Corner Cont.*

for blacks to take advantage of the labor shortage created in the wake of WWI. African Americans made significant gains in industrial employment, particularly in the steel, automobile, shipbuilding and meatpacking industries.

A group of African Americans led by Robert L. Hill organized the Progressive Farmers and Householders Union in 1919 to protect themselves against exploitation and to advance “the intellectual, material, moral, spiritual and financial interests of the Negro race.” The union was destroyed in the “Elaine [Arkansas] Massacre” on September 30, 1919 in Phillips County, Arkansas, when white law enforcement officials and vigilantes from neighboring counties and states attacked union officials and members, killing up to 100 African Americans.

In 1925, A. Philip Randolph began his fight to gain recognition of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters by the Pullman Car Company, and to procure satisfactory compensation and job security. Randolph ultimately succeeded in his quest in 1937 and in the process became a leader in the fight against racism in the workplace and the nation.

In 1934 the Southern Tenant Farmers Union was founded in eastern Arkansas. After WWI the collapse of cotton prices led to strained landlord-tenant relations as planters sought to shift some losses to tenants by manipulating accounts and, in some cases, outright fraud. The STFU was an interracial union from its very beginning. Posing a direct challenge to the established order in Arkansas, in two years the union boasted 25,000 members, which included former Ku Klux Klansmen as well as survivors of the “Elaine Massacre,” and by the end of 1936 claimed 31,000 members in seven states. The STFU was able to directly alleviate some of the oppressive living and working conditions of its members. Although the STFU was never fully integrated (most of its locals were all black or all white), it did leave an indelible mark upon the U.S. and symbolized for many what labor could accomplish if racial identity could be ignored.

The 1940s proved to be a decade in which African Americans would achieve their greatest economic gains (in terms of real advances and in relation to

whites) since the Civil War. In 1941 A. Philip Randolph pressured President Roosevelt into issuing Executive Order 8802 which ended racial discrimination in hiring by unions and employers and established the Committee on Fair Employment Practice (FEPC). The order declared it to be the “duty of employers and of labor organizations to provide for the full and equitable participation of all workers in defense industries, without discrimination because of race, creed, color, or national origin.” All defense contracts were to include a provision “obligating the contractor not to discriminate against any worker because of race, creed, color or national origin.” Between 1941-1946 the FEPC handled 14,000 complaints of discrimination, 80% of which were filed by African Americans.

The major domestic political issue of post WWII America was civil rights, which was troubling for many unions because of racist provisions in their own practice. However, in the 1950s and 1960s, the AFL-CIO strongly supported the civil rights movement, funded civil rights organizations, and lobbied in support of civil rights legislation. The AFL-CIO pushed unions to open their ranks to African-American workers, even at the expense of losing affiliates in some of the southern states.

In 1946, when Roman Mayfield was hired at the Boeing Seattle plant, African-American workers were not allowed to join the union. Roman still attended all union meetings, but could not participate. The union finally recognized minorities and Roman joined in 1950. Brother Mayfield devoted his life to the union, and was one of the few Boeing union employees who participated in all five of its strikes. He walked the picket line, he distributed strike checks, coordinated food to the picket lines, counseled other workers, and helped anywhere there was work to be done. In 2004 at the Grand Lodge convention, the delegates honored him and voted unanimously to name one of the scholarships after Brother Mayfield.

Don't think that I am naive enough to believe that we no longer have any racial conflicts these days. Most certainly racism still exists today. One need look no further than at our state politicians who compare illegal immigrants to feral hogs, or who make racist comments via nasty e-mails about the First Lady. But among union members, times

*Presidents Corner Cont.*

have changed for the better, thanks in no small part to people such as Roman Mayfield. He, along with his union-minded predecessors mentioned above (and many others), realized that progress can be made quicker and last longer if all of us work together toward a common goal. There is power in numbers. United our voices are louder and can be heard more clearly. Unions that have the power to collectively bargain and negotiate contracts can bring more and better benefits to their members. According to the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, African American workers who are union members earn 40 percent more than non-union black workers.

Is there still room for improvement? Of course, there always is. Our union welcomes all Spirit employees and strives to be sensitive and responsive to the needs and aspirations of all its members, regardless of race or gender. If you are not a member of LL839, please accept this personal invitation to attend one of our monthly meetings, or drop by the local to visit with some of us. We'd like to hear from you.

**Super Bowl Basket Winner!!!**

By: Stan Chapman

Chuck Gough won the first basket drawing of 2012 – the Super Bowl basket. Chuck is a first-time winner and works in the Logistics Communication Center for Transportation.

Included in the basket was a tin of 3-flavor popcorn made in the USA, a Wilson Official Size Football, a DVD, a 2012 IAM calendar and lots of other snacks to munch on during the big game. The value of the basket was over \$55.00.

Congratulations Chuck!

Local Lodge 839 Community Service committee members are working hard this year to raise funds to provide assistance to our members in need and to support local area organizations as well. The drawing tickets and hamburgers that you buy each meeting enable us to help where we can. We had a tremendous need last year and we were able to help many families with cards for groceries and necessities.

We draw for our baskets at the end of the Local Lodge meeting, and a picture of the winner is taken for the newsletter. Please try to attend your monthly meetings and maybe you will be the next winning ticket holder! Good Luck!



**Report From District 70**

The District Staff and the in Plant Reps have been meeting and addressing areas of the contract that our members have been having issues with. We started the year out with more communication coming from the Joint Partnership Committee (JPC) "Partnership Connection". The first communication this year came in January which was on Shift Preference and the in line Promotion process. For the month of February it is Best Practice on new hires, their first day through their probation which you will find in this copy of the Machinists Matters. If you notice the focus is on communicating with the steward first, so each of these important topics can receive the highest level of attention.

The Membership is looking for leadership on the shop floor and that starts with their elected Shop Steward. Shift preference, the promotion process, and new hires are topics that need to be addressed and understood before it is an issue. The new hire issue was brought to our attention last year when some new hires were not receiving reviews; they were not being introduced to their steward and many other areas that you now see in the Februarys communication piece Partnership Connection. This is a tool that we can utilize to go back and look what should be happening in your area and if it is not, then you have a joint communication that sets the ground work for you. We are working on this process (Partnership Connection) to improve it even more so if you have ideas or suggestion please let your Union leadership know.

We would like to thank all the stewards for their hard work each and every day the leadership that you have been showing and the continue assistance you have given the membership to grow stronger every day.

## **Voter ID Mania**

By: Kathleen Butler

Would somebody please tell me what's up with Secretary of State Chris Kobach and his insistence on voter id? He's been running around Kansas like chicken little for years railing against voter fraud and then we find out that of the 1,644,700 registered voters in the state of Kansas only 41 were accused of committing voter fraud in 2010. Of those, 17 were felons and 13 were folks who tried to vote twice, all citizens of the US by the way. Yet he acts like foreign nationals are overrunning our elections and the sky will fall if he doesn't sweep in and stop it. I have one question for Chris. Does he really believe someone who is too afraid to go to the doctor for fear of deportation is going to take the chance of being kicked out by voting? I think not.

Besides, his party has the governors office and the legislature (proof enough that voter fraud hasn't stopped them from being elected), both of whom have shoved through a budget that has short-changed education, defunded the arts, left the disabled twisting in the wind and for good measure vilified unions-in particular teachers and their pensions. As the mother of a teacher that pisses me off enough, but as a tax paying citizen I am even more ticked at having to show my "papers" to vote. Who knew we lived in Russia? To add insult to injury he's decided that 2013 is too late for the ID law to go in effect, so insists on it being moved

up to June 2012. Gee Chris, are we concerned about President Obama being reelected? Not to worry. Republicans outnumber Democrats 2 to 1 in Kansas. Coupled with our antiquated Electoral College system and a vote for a democrat for president in this red state is null and void anyway.

Now Chris says the IDs will be free, but with fewer and fewer DMV offices open (again to due to budget cuts) how does he expect anyone to get those free IDs? The working poor (overwhelmingly democrats) may not be able to take time off the job to wait in line or if they do have time may not have transportation to get there. I suppose it's a break that the elderly are allowed to use expired ID; if they have one in the first place.

Bottom line, this is a pole tax by another name. It's true no money will be exchanged, but put inconvenience with roadblocks and add a pinch of indignity and you have an electorate well on its way to feeling even more jaded about this so called democratic system than it is already. When referring to this law Ernestine Krehbiel, president of the Kansas League of Women voters put it best in the February 2nd Wichita Eagle; "Its just chaos, and chaos for no reason. It's a solution in search of a problem". Now THAT'S a fact Chris, rampant voter fraud is not.

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**The following is a list of acceptable forms of I.D. you must posses in order to vote.**

- A driver's license or nondriver's identification card issued by Kansas or by another state or district of the United States
- A concealed carry of handgun license issued by Kansas or a concealed carry of handgun or weapon license issued by another state or district of the United States
- A United States passport
- An employee badge or identification document issued by a municipal, county, state, or federal government office
- A military identification document issued by the United States
- A student identification card issued by an accredited postsecondary institution of education in the state of Kansas

A public assistance identification card issued by a municipal, county, state or federal government office

## Joint Partnership Advocates Report

We have been seeing much better results at the orientation desk since the beginning of the year. Thanks to International President Tom Buffenbarger for his excellent video. We are anxiously awaiting CEO Jeff Turner's video to add to the presentation.



We have worked with Labor Relations on some changes to the Dialogic Leadership class, and we have gone over these changes with DBR Steve Rooney. We are currently awaiting additional information from Dr. James Leslie former director of the IAM Winpisinger Institute and James Parker IAM Southern Territory Educator to move forward with these changes. The stewards and managers, to whom we have mentioned this class, are excited to attend.

Our Organizing Committee is currently working and implementing their Strategic Plan. This committee is growing, and we hope that it will continue to grow rapidly. Part of this strategy is Basic Steward training. We are currently working with the LL839 Executive Board and members from the District Staff to achieve steward training and leadership classes.



**This communication is intended to be shared with the Union Stewards, the Team Leaders, and in Crew Meetings.**

***The following New Hire Best Practice have been developed for implementation by all managers/stewards/team leaders for performance excellence of new hires, promotions, or lateral transfers.***

### [IAM New Hire – Best Practice – Day One](#)

#### •*Manager/Steward/Team Leader Meeting*

- *Introductions – to include Roles & Responsibilities of each and how each can help the new hire.*
- *Review Expectations of Employee – to include as a minimum:*
  - *Start Time, Attendance Guidelines/How to contact Manager/Team Leader*
  - *Other Topics/policies – locations of bathrooms, exits, clock punch stations & Cafeterias*
- *Employee Review Process*
  - *Assigned similar set of tasks – per contract, so that the employee can be evaluated responsibly*
  - *Weekly feedback to employee (from the Manager/Steward/Team Leader ) (contact GRP Employee Relations with questions) have OA set up on first day all weekly sessions on the Manager/Steward/Team Leader's calendars*
  - *Formal 30/60 (90 day if promotion) day reviews (Note to Managers: you should know if the employee is progressing by 45 days.)*
  - *Manager clarifies with the employee that they should contact the Manager/Steward/Team Leader with any concerns*
- *Team Leader/Safety Monitor Meeting*
- *Safety Monitor Checklist*
- *PPE, etc.*

**NEW MEMBERS FOR JANUARY**

Seandra Agnew

Kevin Atkinson

Bryan Boyle

Collin Duntz

Daniel Edwards

Lucas Fowler

Beverly Haskins

Justin M. Irving

Vinh P. Le

Chaveevan G. McClure

Joshua D. Moss

William Perry II

Tim Prochaska

Kyle Ross

Jonathan R. Shade

Robert L. Stevens

William Albertin

Terry Autry II

Shaun Craig

Harold Dunwoody

Daniel Ferris

Jakob Fraas

Cory Hirschfeld

Paul Jones

Chris Madrigal

Andrew S. McGinnis

Adam W. Nethercot

Gregory Phillips

Maria Resendez

Lauryce Ross

Brad Shepherd

Rodney E. Stewart

Jeremy Ames

Brian C. Aylward

Nathan C. Deer

Justin Eastman

Marlan W. Forrest

German Gallegos

Magnum Inthavong

Bennie Kinchion

Kristaan Markham

Michael Morrow

Cuong Nguyen

Tracy L. Porter

Daniel M. Robledo

Carlos Salas

Chadd Stevens

Josh Strickland

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**Local Lodge 839**

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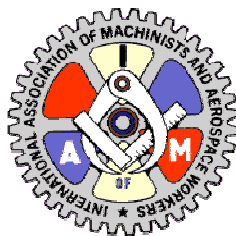
**AEROSPACE**



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***The Fighting Machinists***

**[www.ll839.org](http://www.ll839.org)**



**Monthly Union Meetings**

**2nd Saturday of the Month**

**Executive Board meets at 8:00 AM**

**Regular Meeting at 10:00 AM**

**President - Kathy Petersen**

**Vice President - Jarrod Lehman**

**Recording Secretary - Larry Stafford**

**Treasurer - Joni Pierce**

**Conductor/Sentinel - Craig Dunbar**

**Trustees - Susan Hiebert, Stan Chapman**

**Christopher Phillips**

**Communicator - Dennis Williams**

**Educator - Roger Stamback**

**1st Shift In-Plant Rep. - David Eagle**

**2nd Shift In-Plant Rep. - Howard "HoJo" Johnson**

**Editor - Jarrod Lehman**

We are the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. We belong to Local Lodge 839 of District 70 in Wichita Kansas. We represent the Fighting Machinists of Spirit AeroSystems. We work to give our members a voice on the job.

Visit our website often at [www.ll839.org](http://www.ll839.org) for helpful and timely information.

If you have any questions, contact one of your In-Plant Representatives at 524-1090.

If you have any articles you want published, e-mail the Editor at [jlehman@ll839.org](mailto:jlehman@ll839.org).

The opinions expressed in any articles are the opinions of that author not the representatives of LL839

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