



# The Brew Review



Local Lodge 2699 Newsletter

March 2011

Editor: Marcus Kilgo  
Co-Editor: Misty King

## From the President's Desk

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There seems to be a belief of some of our members that the Union is nothing but a clique of individuals that run everything. In a sense the clique they are referring to are the officers of our local lodge. These individuals who are elected every three years by the members of our lodge do run the day to day operations of the local. These employees have bothered to get involved and tried to change things. These individuals are the employees that have stood their ground

and grieved issues in the present and past. They have been radical when it was not popular to be so. They have shown this membership they care about the Union and the membership by challenging management on the issues that we feel are unjust or unfair. As elected officers (clique) they will continue to represent this membership to the best of their ability.

It is incumbent upon all Union members to read and enforce the labor agreement that we negotiate with the company every three years. Stewards are the first line of defense but we need all employees reading and enforcing the contract. If we don't enforce the language in the contract we could lose it in the next round of negotiations. We have a lot of individuals that always want to gripe about things going on at work but how many times have they actually filed a grievance, usually none. Why do they complain to other employees but fail to grieve their issue. Most of the time it is because they find it easier to cut down the Union instead of the company. Sometimes it is because they are scared to stand up for what they are complaining about. Does the Union set the quotas for vacations? No. Does the Union cut back or increase the overtime? No. Does the Union pick and choose who is to be trained? No. Does the Union wait until the last minute to tell employees they have to work over? No. It is the management of this company that does everything that gets under every ones skin. Does anyone ever file a grievance over issues that they think is not right? No, most of the time they run to the Union representatives for help. The grievance system is there to challenge managements decisions that are covered in the contract, state and federal laws.

I am requesting that more of you get involved. Attend our Union meetings held on the second Saturday of every month at 8:00 A.M. at our Union office. Bring questions to the officers or stewards of things you do not understand. Don't set at the break tables and complain, do something more, get involved.

The I.A.M. Pension plan recently notified all of us that beginning with our next contract that we will have our pension calculated under a schedule B pension plan. This will cause us to have decreases of about 40% in the

amount of pension benefits we will receive after March 1, 2013. It will not affect the amount that is already earned under plan A this will still be paid out at the higher rate. I have heard a lot of complaining, griping and bitching about this but mostly from the newer employees.

This pension plan was put in effect here 31 years ago and the amount that all new employees receive into the I.A.M. and their 401-K plans was not given to us out of the goodness of the company's heart. The members of this local fought long and hard to get the contributions and to keep them increasing over the years. When we started out in 1980 we were lucky to have 5 cent increases every contract period. It has taken us 31 years to get the contributions where they are today. So to hear new employees complain about the change in the plan really irks me. Knowing that they came through the door getting what we bargained over for years. I just wonder how many would complain if they had to start out with a pay of \$12.70 an hour and a nickel going into their pension plans. I am sure it would be all of them. The pension plan had to make changes to the plan because of the loss of membership to our Union and to insure that it remains solvent in order to pay all future retirees. I personally don't like the change but I also know that with anything whether it be the stock market, social security, or pensions that adjustments have to be made to insure the longevity of these programs for all. If we all work to increase our membership here and at other locations there is always the chance that in the future they could put us back in the A- Plan.

In closing I wish to warn everyone of falling into a trap with MillerCoors Brewing Company. This company has told us their intentions to implement lead technicians in our upcoming contract. Until we sit down and bargain over this issue they cannot begin any discussions or send anyone for training for placement in these supposed positions.

Work Smart Work Safe

Tom Peters, President

# FROM THE VP

It's no secret: Not everyone sees unions as key to rebuilding America and the middle class. It's easy to tune out the [misinformation about unions](#) and the workers who make them strong when you hear it on the news, but what should you do when the same misinformation comes from your friends and family? We're here to help with some simple facts so you can speak up the next time you encounter someone attacking unions, and help shed light on what unions are really all about!

**MYTH: Unions are run by big, overpaid bosses.**

**FACT: Unions are run by workers.**

- A union is simply a group of employees who join together to address workplace issues, so they can improve their working conditions and have a fair shot at a better life for themselves and their families.
- Unions are democratic institutions. At the local, state, and national level, all union leadership is elected by majority votes—just like elections for public office.

**MYTH: Unions only care about their members.**

**FACT: Unions are fighting to improve the lives of all workers.**

- It's easy to forget that we have unions to thank for a lot of things we take for granted today in today's workplaces: the minimum wage, the 8-hour work day, child labor laws, health and safety standards, and even the weekend.
- Today, unions across the country are on the frontlines advocating for basic workplace reforms like increases in the minimum wage, and pushing lawmakers to require paid sick leave. [Studies show](#) that a large union presence in an industry or region can raise wages even for non-union workers. That means more consumer spending, and a stronger economy for us all. So it's no wonder that most Americans (61%) believe that "labor unions are necessary to protect the working person," according to Pew's most recent [values survey](#).

**MYTH: Union workers are lazy, and unions are bad for business.**

**FACT: Unions and profitability go hand in hand.**

- Actually, unions make the workplace more efficient – despite the stereotype that we all hear.
- Unions raise productivity on average by up to 24% in manufacturing, 16% in hospitals, and 38% in the construction. Union workers have higher professional standards because unions increase opportunities for worker training. Many even offer their own training programs.
- Union workers are employed in some of the most respected professions. They're nurses, firefighters, teachers, day care providers, engineers, and NASA scientists. Union members are responsible for building nuclear subs, the space shuttle, The Smithsonian, the Hoover Dam Bypass Bridge, and even the American flag. Even [small business owners](#) think that unions are good for workers—and the economy. In fact, over 80% agree "strong unions make the free market system stronger." They're right. Unions exist at some of the most successful companies out there, including AT&T, Costco, UPS, and Southwest.

**MYTH: Unions ask for too much. In this economy, people should be thankful for any job.**

**FACT: Good jobs mean a stronger economy, and that means more jobs.**

This idea is coming straight from the same corporations that ran our economy into the ground. Now they're taking advantage of our financial worries to grab an even [bigger slice of the pie](#).

- It's just plain wrong to make working Americans foot the bill for Wall Street's party. And it's also bad for the economy. Because when workers can't afford the products they produce, consumer spending takes a serious hit, and the economy does, too. But when workers can bargain for family-sustaining pay and benefits, consumer spending increases. The result is a stronger economy—one that creates jobs and enables people to work their way into the middle class.

Bill Young

Vice- President

## **A PATRIOTIC FERVOR OF UNIONISM**

The State of the Union in the labor movement is in need for non active members to become active! All Union members today enjoy the fruits of labor from those who lost life and liberty so that we would have a voice today. Where is that voice? Where is the Patriotism among working American's today to support each other? Why are we all divided? In the early 20th century the American workers were no different than we are today. They didn't all agree on social issues or politics, yet when it came to solidarity on the working conditions and compensation of workers they organizes themselves with a patriotic fervor that swept the country. It was the strong foundations of solidarity that enable workers from all backgrounds to build up the American "Middle Class".

By the 1980's those who had survived the fights were reaching their retirement years, it was time to hand over the fight to the next generation of workers. These workers enjoy a new and strong Middle Class, a high standard of living, more opportunity's for their on children to get better educations and become even more successful.

Individualism has over taken Unionism. The lost of Solidarity in the Union work forces today in America are a direct reflections of the State of Union Shops being able to retain and organize new work shops.

Republican or Democrat? Really it should make no difference what party is in the Majority or the Minority, if we as union members would participate on the behaves of each other with one voice of solidarity to be the lobby for the working people, we can rebuild the foundations for a piece of the American Dream. The land of the Free is who we are, make no mistake nothing is free in America, but you have the freedom to "Actively" pursue the absolute most you can get out of her or others will absolutely shut you out.

Workers Patriotism with each other is the Characteristic Bond we must forge to truly be among the Free today in America, it was true 80 years ago and needed now more than ever.

Being an active union member means being a deputy to your shop stewards helping right wrongs and educating others in and out of the work place about unionism. We all have a part no matter your positions in your local to be a teacher of organize labor, attend meeting's when you can, read your newsletter, write to your newsletter, most of all always be a deputy of the labor movement. *Unionism is Patriotism.....*

***Solidarity Strong,***

***Thumper***

# What If We Were the "Coors" in MillerCoors?

Happy New Year my Union Brothers and Sisters, I hope that you all had a wonderful Christmas break. Time to relax with the family and catch up on some much needed rest. Its wonderful to have a job that pays a living wage with benefits and paid time off for the Christmas Holiday's. We truly are blessed to have a Union here at MillerCoors at least the ones that work for Miller. We have a Collective Bargaining Agreement here at this Brewery something our fellow Brothers and Sisters don't have at our sister breweries that are Coors plants. Yes they are our Brothers and Sisters too as are all working Americans in the USA. As union members we have a duty to fight for and protect the rights of all our Brothers and Sisters in the USA. What if you were the "Coors" to our "MillerCoors"? Would you have been paid to spend time with your family during the Christmas Holi-days? NO you would not have!! Sad but true. Brothers and Sisters there is a lot that we get that the Coors folks don't get. Free beer at Coors? Not until they became "MillerCoors". Why?? Because they found out we get free beer, something we negotiated in our Collective Bargaining Agreement. Surly we should all hope that a few cases of free beer will not be enough for the hard working folks at the Coors breweries to recognize that they can get more if they organize themselves, only time will tell. Brothers and Sisters we can do better right here in our own Local. What's that? Do better? YES do better at being more supportive of each other, understanding that we will not always agree but that we must debate and participate to enforce and renew our on Collective Bargaining Agreement. We must teach and learn together to preserve and protect our way of life in the work place for not only ourselves but for those that will follow. We as Union members like it or not have a duty to all working class Americans to push forward our message to leave behind a better work place for those to follow, if it were not for the Union members before us to fight and protect our rights, ask yourselves this " *WHAT IF WE WERE THE "COORS" IN MILLERCOORS*"

Fraternally Yours,

Eben Barnett, III

## WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

I believe this discussion could lead to being disciplined. I therefore request that my union representative or officer be present to assist me at the meeting. I further request reasonable time to consult with my union representative regarding the subject and purpose of the meeting. Please consider this a continuing request; without representation I shall not participate in this discussion. I shall not consent to any searches or tests affecting my person, property, or effects without first consulting with my union representative.

# House Dems Shape HOPE

*Caucus successful in creating positive changes to GOP proposals*

**(Atlanta, Ga.) - March 1, 2011** - The Georgia House of Representatives today passed HB 326, a HOPE scholarship reform on a vote of 152 - 22.

House Democrats have worked diligently with the Governor and his leadership team to include provisions that would best benefit Georgia's students.

"This is an ongoing process. Certainly, our leadership is pleased with key components and concessions the Governor has made to include Democrats' concerns in his legislation. We will continue to work with the Senate to perfect this bill," said Stacey Abrams, House minority leader.

Abrams pointed out four very critical areas Gov. Deal included in his HOPE reform legislation:

- Allowing remedial classes for technical school;
- Allowing proprietary schools continued access to the Tuition Equalization Grant;
- Minimizing cuts to pre-K through increased funding to extended care for at-risk children;
- Funding the 1 percent loan program to help students bridge any financial gap.

The basic HOPE scholarship was also amended to include a 3.3 GPA, reduced from 3.7, originally proposed.

Six amendments to soften the blow of HOPE reform were offered by Democrats in Rules Committee today. Those measures would have provided that military spouses, required to travel and serving active duty, be included in HOPE; would have allowed continued funding for the scholarship shortfall reserve loan fund to pay for tuition, room and board shortfalls through a low-interest loan; and, allow students already receiving HOPE in the 2010 - 2011 academic school year to be grandfathered into the scholarship program.

Some House Democrats opposed any changes to any of the HOPE programming that would reduce the educational opportunities for Georgia's students, workers returning to school and those seeking technical skills training.

"We are working hard with our colleagues and allies to be certain that our concerns are heard and that as many students as possible - those in school and those who hope to attend - will be able to utilize the HOPE program," said Rep. Calvin Smyre, chairman emeritus of the House Democratic Caucus.

The bill moves now to the State Senate. ###

# Democratic Reps. Announces Resolution to Protect Pre-K

*Stuckey, Ashe say state straight jacketing program*

**Ed. Note: There are 85,000 pre-K slots available with a waiting list of 10,000. See corrected quote below.**

**(Atlanta, Ga.) - February 24, 2011** - This week, Rep. Stephanie Stuckey Benfield, Rep. Kathy Ashe, Rep. Simone Bell and Rep. Rashad Taylor and other Democrats introduced House Resolution 364 to encourage the Georgia Legislature to increase the quality, accessibility and affordability of the state's pre-K programs.

The **Saving Pre-K Resolution** aims to raise the standards for pre-K, providing resources for parents to evaluate pre-K learning and fully funding public pre-K programs by cutting funding to student scholarship organizations that fund private schools.

"It is vitally important that we safeguard children's learning in their formative years, particularly since ninety percent of brain development occurs by age 5," said Benfield. "If we want to have all students in Georgia reading by the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, then it's critical that we have a quality early learning program in place."

Similar to the HOPE scholarship, the pre-K grant is awarded through lottery-funded slots, applied for by parents. However, every year since its inception in 1992, the percentage of the budget that goes to pre-K has declined.

"The state has given wings to HOPE but straight jacketed pre-K," said Benfield.

Benfield's resolution also addresses the waiting list for HOPE-funded pre-K programs.

"Currently, there are **approximately 10,000 students on the waiting list** to attend pre-K programs. This is simply not acceptable," said Rep Simone Bell, a co-sponsor of the resolution.

Pre-K offers six hours of daily instruction to four-year-olds. Gov. Deal's budget proposal for pre-K reduces those daily hours of instruction from six to four, while adding 5,000 new slots. Pre-K providers, especially public school systems, may drop out of the program due to concerns about transportation and teacher funding.

"The Governor's proposal cuts deliverable hours by 33 percent," said Rep. Kathy Ashe. "This would be a step backward. No other state pre-K program in the country has gone from a full-day to a half-day program. Research indicates that the quality of education - and quality interaction with teachers and other students - is stronger with a full-day program, especially for disadvantaged children."

Rashad Taylor said Georgia is moving in the wrong direction.

"At a time when Georgia is trying to raise our educational standards, cutting pre-K sends the wrong message and pushes our state further down the wrong educational path."

The co-sponsors of the resolution have been active in taking her education-themed message to voters and constituents. Since the start of the session, Democrats have helped more than 40 Democratic lawmakers host town hall meetings to discuss issues being debated at the state capitol, including the HOPE scholarship and pre-K programs. ###

# Leo Hindery Calls for Focus on U.S. Manufacturing

*Thu. February 17, 2011*

In an [op-ed](#) published on The Huffington Post, Leo Hindery, Chairman of the Smart Globalization Initiative at the New America Foundation, addresses what he calls the “myth of offshoring.”

“For fully two decades, the American people have been fed the canard that the offshoring of literally millions of American manufacturing jobs is an acceptable price to pay for lower cost imported consumer goods,” writes Hindery. “Yet indisputably, we now know from work done by the non-partisan Center for Economic and Policy Research and others, that for the vast majority of Americans, the gains in lower prices from trade are being outweighed by wage losses – meaning net losses for most American workers.

“Shifting production overseas has inflicted far worse damage on the U.S. economy than the numbers show.” Hindery says it’s imperative the Obama administration focuses more on manufacturing and less on becoming “BFFs” with Big Business.

“No economy as large and complex as ours can prosper with less than 20-25 percent of its workers being in manufacturing and without the sector contributing a like percentage of GDP,” he writes. “Yet there has been no commitment to driving the sector back to these higher levels of employment and economic contribution.”

Hindery warns that the President’s new Council on Jobs and Competitiveness, if it is to be successful, must first recognize that there will be no job creation without trade reform, a successful trade reform agenda must be fair, and the council must take a strong stance against offshoring American jobs.

# GOP Blocks Aid to Trade Displaced Workers

*Thu. February 10, 2011*

House Republicans have this week blocked a vote on a bill that would extend training and unemployment benefits to workers who lost their job as a result of foreign trade. The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) reauthorization bill was pulled from the House floor as Rep. Dave Camp (R-MI), Chairman of the House Ways & Means Committee, expressed his intentions to use the bill as leverage for the passage of pending free trade agreements with Colombia and Panama.

“The GOP’s recent refusal to vote on a program that, since 1962, has helped to retrain, educate and find work for tens of thousands of workers impacted by our country’s unfair trade laws, is another slap in the face to working families trying to keep their head above water,” said IAM International President Tom Buffenbarger. “And to use the bill as leverage for more unfair trade laws is unthinkable. Panama remains a tax haven for U.S. and foreign corporations. And, Colombia remains the most dangerous country in the world for trade unionists and human rights’ activists. It is imperative Congress take action to extend TAA benefits immediately.”

The TAA program was extended to service workers as part of the Recovery Act in 2009. Since that time, an estimated 400,000 workers have been certified to receive TAA services, including 170,000 workers who may not have otherwise been eligible. The extended benefits are set to expire February 12, 2011.

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U.S. Postage  
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Albany, Georgia  
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### IAM & AW BREW REVIEW

An official paper published monthly by Brewery L. L. 2699, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO at 500 Cordele Road, Albany, GA representing production and maintenance employees. The editor reserves the right to edit and reject any material submitted for publication. No one is authorized to solicit advertisement for any publication in the name of IAM BREW REVIEW.

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## LOCAL LODGE MEETING

Saturday  
April 9th  
8:00 a.m.

## LOCAL LODGE MEETING

Saturday  
May 14th  
8:00 a.m.