



# Steel Valley News

## A Letter from the President

By Dan Boone

Brothers and Sisters, I hope you found our first newsletter informative and worth the time to read. Going forward we will continue to refine the newsletter to give you a better idea of what's going on at the mill. Our intent is to give you factual information on a monthly basis and to quell any misinformation that may be distributed in the mill or on social media. For instance, when it comes to your rights as a union member, I urge you all to read your contract book and gain a better understanding of not only your rights, but also what rights the company has as well. Of course you will always have stewards, committeemen, and officers available to represent you but knowledge is power. I would suggest you start with Article 5. Therein lies the basis of how we function on many recurring issues on a day to day basis. The new contract books are at the printers

now and should be arriving shortly. Any changes from 2015 to the 2018 contract can be found in the summary provided with the ballot you used to ratify the new 4 year agreement.

**Time Clocks:** The first issue I would like to address is the Time Clocks. We are still waiting for the International to schedule a date to arbitrate the grievance filed on the installation of time clocks and we have not agreed with the company on moving forward with their plans. Your division administrators are currently in training for the implementation of this time keeping system known as Day Force. The company has also started tightening relief times and again, there is no agreement with the union on this. The one thing I would absolutely stress is that you accurately record your hours. If you actually work 11 hours and you are scheduled 12 hours, only report 11 hours. Because of so many people false reporting, the company is now actively looking for theft of time. This is a dischargeable offense and people have already lost their jobs because of it. The company plans to activate the system plant wide in May and although the clocks will not be recording your time, they will be testing the system. The tightening of the start times are not currently tied to the swipe cards/time clock

system. At this point the union has taken all appropriate actions to stop the process.

**Hiring:** We tried our best to make you aware of the hiring process and the taking of applications on April 1st. In reference to the one week delay and the renotification of taking new applications, the company failed to notify us in advance as they had agreed to so I had the process stopped and moved to April 1st. The company proceeded to accept minimal applications and then shut the system down but the system continued to take applications. You should know that the union was NOT in agreement with the number of applications accepted and feel that whatever applications the system accepted is what the company should honor. We will continue to pursue a satisfactory outcome on this issue and I wish the successful applicants the best of luck in acquiring a job with us here at the mill. We are well aware that we are short of people, both maintenance and production, in every department. Grievances have been filed by your committeemen and meetings on the hiring of additional people will continue. This includes increasing the overall number permitted by Chicago.

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## *A Letter from the Safety Chairman*

By Tony Pasquale

Union sisters and brothers,

I sincerely hope you had a safe and enjoyable Saint Patrick's Day. The plant as a whole had 15 injuries, three OSHA recordable, one loss time injury, and one restricted work case. Iron producing did not have a good month for safety. This department alone had four injuries, two OSHA recordable, one loss time injury, and one restricted work case as of March 26th.

We had OSHA in the plant on two separate complaints last month. One was a complaint about silica exposure in the 750 building in the hot mill. On Friday March 22, 2019 they did silica testing on nine individuals and one area sample. The results are expected to be in April 1st. The other was regarding polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the tandem mill basement in finishing. The company contends that the PCB exposure was the result of poor communication. The union contends that it is a blatant disregard for safety on the supervisor's part and lack of training for all. In all 24 members were exposed to PCBs. It

would be impossible for me to get into all of the details here, but let me assure you that once the union was made aware OSHA was called and a full investigation was launched. Next month I hope to have some more information to share in regards to the investigations of both cases. I would like to thank Sam Moyer for bringing it to our attention, and helping to facilitate the investigation. Let me remind everyone that our policy for suspected hazardous material is to isolate the area and notify your supervisor. Never assume that asbestos or PCBs are not present until it has been properly tested by a certified company, ArcelorMittal is not that company, or you have seen the safety data sheet (SDS).

SDSs are a great tool to utilize in the field, and must be provided to you by your supervisor for every product used in the plant. If you cannot find an SDS you

cannot use the product. SDSs provide key information about a product including but not limited to hazardous identification, PPE/exposure controls, ingredient information, and first aid, just to name a few. In my 40+ years in this mill things we used to use day in and day out are now classified as hazardous or even carcinogens today. Using SDSs will help protect you from today's day to day chemicals that may become tomorrow's carcinogens.

One final item to note is that in the month of March we closed out an OSHA case from November of 2017. The union and company had a dispute over recording a particular injury in the OSHA 300 log. After an informal meeting between union safety and the company's lawyers OSHA determined that it is in fact an OSHA recordable violation. At this

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**Incident investigation training class graduates.**

Bob Boardman, James Morris #1SP, Arbert Gonzalez #2SP, Sam Franks IP, Jack Hearn Jr HM and Bill Click MEU

## *A Letter from the Grievance Chair*

By Tony Panza

There is a great deal of discussion these days in regards to “Time Clocks.” I think most of you know that several years ago the Company decided to go to Time Clocks here in Cleveland. We were the last of all of the AM plants to not have them.

The Company had given us notice but made it clear that they believed that in no way had to negotiate with us. We disagreed feeling that there was a prior verbal agreement prior to 2002 that the Company must now honor. We also believed at the time it was a mandatory subject of bargaining but the NLRB ruled against us on that so the grievance is our last stand.

The reason that 2002 is significant in this case is that the following language was inserted in the contract with ISG. Article 5 Section A Subsection 6 “As of the Effective Date, all future Local Working Conditions must be reduced to writing and signed by the Plant Manager and the Local Union President/Unit Chair” So any agreement after 2002 must be

in writing and signed. If not, it is merely a verbal agreement which in essence can be discontinued at any time.

Article 5 Section A Subsection 3 “ Should there be any Local Working Condition in effect which provides benefits that are in excess of, or in addition to, but not in conflict with benefits established by this agreement, they shall remain in effect for the term of this Agreement, except as they are changed in accordance with Paragraph 4 below”. So for us any agreement that may exist prior to 2002 shall remain the law of the land unless it is legally changed. Our contention is that this was an agreement between the guy who ran the place and the Union President at the time prior to ISG when CMM briefly managed the plant.

Article 5 Section A Subsection 4 “The Company will have the right to Change any Local Working Condition if the basis for the existence of the Local Working Condition is Changed, thereby making it inappropriate to continue such Local Working Condition; provided however, that the Change shall be reasonable and equitable”

Now when you hear the “Crap House lawyers” talk about past practice this is the passage that you need to remind them of. In the old days, prior to this language being put into the Contract, if something occurred a particular way each and

every time either side could claim “Past Practice”. That was to say this has been done the same way each time over so much time it is the law of the land so to speak. Now not quite as easy as it sounds as again it would have to establish it occurred the same way every time and usually over several years to get an Arbitrator to agree.

Our Time Clock Grievance has been slated for Arbitration for some time and hopefully it will be heard and we can get a definitive answer back. Meanwhile I stress to all of you to realize that Time Clocks or not you need to make sure each and every day to have the actual time on your time sheet that you were here. Do your time each and every day and prior to signing your sheet make sure you review the hours.

### Did You Know...

If a company representative wants to have a discussion with you about discipline or discharge, you legally do not have to participate without a Union Rep present?

Stop the meeting and ask for your Committeeman or Steward.

These are your Weingarten Rights!

*A Letter  
from the  
President*

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**Events:** Our activities committee has been working to make 2019 the best year ever for Local 979 member events. Thus far we have plans for 2 golf outings, an Indians/Yankees game in June and 2 different days at Cedar point in July and August, all at greatly reduced prices. We will be holding other events as well as the year progresses. We do understand that someone has to be at work and try to account for that by holding multiple events.

**Appointments:** I want to thank Mike Longa for all his services as the Union Training Coordinator. For personal reasons, Mike has chosen to step down and return to working in the mill. Mike has advanced the quality of training in many ways and will be missed. Director Dave McCall has appointed Adam Vlainic from Iron Producing to fill the position of training coordinator. Before this appointment, Adam was the union Iron Producing Safety Advocate. Sam Franks has been appointed to fill Adam's position as safety advocate. I wish Adam and Sam the best in their new positions.

**Solidarity:** Solidarity is more than just a word. To me it means a unity among individuals with a

common interest. The common interest I know we all share is keeping the plant viable, productive, and running at full capacity. All of what we earn and produce in our world class facility is because of you and the work you do every day. We must remain firm in our resolve to protect each other, and our plant, and protect our rights guaranteed by the labor agreement. Our first call to report issues should never be to the company. Doing this is a disservice to our brothers and sisters as well as the union.

In Solidarity  
Dan Boone

*A Letter from  
the Safety Chairman*

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time the company refused to accept OSHA's ruling, and a court date was set. The union was assigned a lawyer from the U.S Department of Labor, and then many long hours of interviews and fact finding were put into this case. Only after depositions were complete did the company want to recognize the injury as an OSHA recordable, and

pay our union brother his lost time. I would personally like to thank all the people involved in doing their due diligence to fight for the rights of our membership. A special shout out goes to Safety Representative Bob Boardman for seeing this case through from beginning to end, and for the many long nights he spent at the union hall.

Just a reminder continue to work safely and stay vigilant on the job. As we draw near to Worker's Memorial Day on April 28th, but celebrated April 25th this year, plan

on attending activities and events at the union hall. One particular event to attend is the memorial service for all of our brothers and sisters who have died on the job, including the recently departed Dave Plavchan.

In solidarity,  
Tony Pasquale

# Announcements

## Upcoming Events

April 25th

**Health Fair / Blood Drive**  
7:30 a.m.  
@ Union Hall

May 7th

**Union Meeting**  
7:30 p.m.  
@Union Hall

June 1st

**USW 979 Summer Golf Outing**  
@ Briardale

## New Positions



Training Coordinator Adam Vlainic



I.P. Safety Advocate Sam Franks

USW Local 979 would like to introduce and welcome two members to new positions with the Local. Adam Vlainic, from Iron Producing, will be the new Training Coordinator starting in May. The Local thanks Michael Longa for his hard work and service to the membership over the last 6 years. On the Safety Committee, Sam Franks will be the new Safety Advocate in Iron Producing.

# UNION CARDS

New Union Cards were issued last month for all members. These cards were mailed directly to your home from the International in a USW envelope.

To have your card laminated, please stop up at the hall during the day or before any Union Meeting.

If you did not receive the new card, we will need to update your address.  
**For info on Union Cards call Rick Pietrick 440-570-0404**

# Committees

## Women of Steel



### Upcoming Events

- May 4<sup>th</sup> Women's Health Fair Luncheon at the Union Hall.

A breakfast bar starts at 5:30 a.m. for women coming into work. Throughout the day there will be a yoga class, chair massages, manicures, a luncheon, and a comedian. There will also be medical professionals there to discuss SPAN, stress, time management, heart disease, breast exams, and child birth issues. All women members and wives of members are invited to attend!

Anyone interested in joining Women Of Steel can call Nicole Perry at 216-496-2196

## Next Generation



### Upcoming Events

- April 9<sup>th</sup> NextGen University Grievance Class 7pm

Chief Grievance Officer Tony Panza will lead an informative class on the steps of our grievance procedure and how it affects us on the shop floor. Food will be provided.

### Summer Bicycle Drive

- If you have extra bicycles in your garage your children have grown out of or no longer use, bring them up to the Hall where we will refurbish and donate the bicycles to children in the neighborhood this summer.

If you are interested in joining Next Generation contact Rick Pietrick 440-570-0404

## Veteran's Committee



The Local 979 Veteran's committee is comprised of any prior service member of the Armed Forces, no matter if they were active duty, reserves, or guard. It doesn't matter if you were ever deployed to an area of conflict or stayed stateside your entire enlistment.

The committee is seeking new members to help with upcoming events. In years past, we've done various raffles that have benefitted members of our Local, military focused organizations, and been very involved with our Toys For Tots campaign in the fall.

Mark your calendars for the Annual Rally For The Troops April 28<sup>th</sup>. We will meet at the Union Hall and ride our motorcycles to downtown Cleveland for the ceremony. Anyone is welcome to attend this ride. It doesn't matter if you are a Veteran or not. You may even attend without a motorcycle.

For more information, help with your VA benefits, or to become a member of the 979 Veteran's Committee

Contact Mike Galletti 216-224-5940

## Sports Committee

Looking for ANY and ALL Members who wish to participate in a Sports League sponsored by Local 979.

Created in 2019, the new Sports Committee will be accepting applications from members who wish to have their league sponsored by the Local.

Any members in good standing are welcome to apply and all sports are eligible for sponsorship.

If your team is mostly made up of Local 979 members, the Sports Committee wants to sponsor you.

For more information call Tony Panza 440-829-4106

## ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

On St. Patrick's Day, members of Local 979 and their families took to the streets of Cleveland to march in the city's annual parade downtown. The parade, in its 177th year, has a long tradition with organized labor and boasts large participation from Local Trade Unions in the area. The Steelworkers were well represented as we marched through downtown on a large, shamrock themed float with the two signature smoke stacks from Steel Producing on the back. Starting down on East 25th, our group heard cheers from the crowd throughout the march, finishing in public square where the Union was formally recognized over the loud speaker by the parade marshall. It was a great time and fun family event for the children who came out. The Local plans on marching again in next year's parade. Look for details in fall on how to participate.



*Upcoming  
Events*

*June 1<sup>st</sup>*

Local 979 Golf Outing

Briardale Greens Golf Course

8:00am Shotgun Start

Deadline to sign up is May 22nd

*June 7<sup>th</sup>*

United Steelworkers Day at Progressive Field.  
Indians vs. Yankees Family Outing

Local 979 will have a tent set up before the game with a food buffet and picnic area. Walk the field with your family and co-workers and watch the Indians beat the Yankees. Forms sent in mail need to be returned to the hall.

*July 6<sup>th</sup> or August 3<sup>rd</sup>*

USW Local 979 Summer Outing  
Cedar Point Amusement Park Family Outing

Deadline for July 6<sup>th</sup> is June 24<sup>th</sup>

Deadline for August 3<sup>rd</sup> is July 22<sup>nd</sup>

**If you are interested in any EVENTS  
Call Sam Moyer 216-571-3322 or Wally Harper 440-525-4657**