

February 2009 Newsletter

The Next General Meeting for IATSE Local 8 will be Wednesday February 4, 2009. The Meeting will be held at 2237 Hartranft Philadelphia Pa. beginning 11:00 a.m. According to the Local 8 Constitution, IATSE Local 8 meets the first Wednesday of each month at 11:00a.m.at 2237 Hartranft Street Philadelphia Pa. except during the months of June, July and August.

The Next Executive Board Meeting for IATSE Local 8 will be on Thursday January 29th, 2009. The Meeting will be held at 2237 Hartranft Philadelphia Pa. beginning 11:00 A.M. The Executive Board meets the last Thursday of each month.

Financial 2008. First quarter stamps are now due. Stamps remain at \$50.00 per quarter \$200 per year for 2009. There has not been an increase in the cost of the union stamp since 1996.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Happy New Year! This is the time of year we look back on the experiences we had in 2008 and look forward to what expectations we have for 2009.

One year ago, Local 8 members were asked to walk a picket line at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. The strike was quick but effective in protecting our jurisdiction and winning substantial wage increases and improved conditions. Since the strike, the Stagehands have taken over operations of the In-House A.V. equipment at the Center. We have also dramatically increased the A.V. work we had in the Hotels. New Term Agreements with Advanced, VAE and Projection helped increase our jobs in this sector of the jurisdiction.

Last January, the Local swore in the newly elected Officers. Under the current administration, the Local approved its first budget. Education Seminars have been regularly scheduled. Progress has been made for the Local's new Training Facility. Local 8 scheduled a successful Golf Outing and the Local helped elect a Labor friendly United States President and House of Representatives.

In 2008, we have also experienced the worst economic downturn in our lifetime. The Stock Market and housing values are down and consumer confidence is at all time low. Given these hard economic times, IATSE members in this area have remained relatively busy which I am thankful for.

The 2008 Local 8 finances are being calculated, the numbers indicate we broke a record for wages for 2008. We are also hopeful to once again be in the black for the 16th year in a row. Given the unforeseen expenses associated with the Department of Labor investigation (\$50,000), we are happy to be able to report these preliminary numbers.

Looking ahead, there is reason for concern and optimism. Concern, that the economy will continue its downward spiral eventually affecting our Employers and jobs. Optimism, that the jobs we have will last long enough to get us through till the economy rebounds.

I, like many of you, think about New Year's Resolutions. In 2009, my list of resolutions includes:

1. Getting jobs for our Members. We are starting off the year well. The Movies, Presidential Inauguration, Academy and Walnut Shows, Lincoln Financial and Wachovia Rock Shows have provided jobs in January. February is starting off slow. The Office is committed to working hard to find every job available in and out of this jurisdiction for our Membership.
2. Opening the Local 8 Training facility. The ability of our members to sustain the jobs we have and develop new work opportunities will depend on our ability to train our Members on the ever-changing technologies. The new IATSE Local 8 Training Facility will give us the ability to accomplish this goal.

3. Negotiate Contracts for our Members. The RPAC Deal along with over thirty other Term Agreements are currently in negotiations. Our goal is to improve wages, benefits and conditions in all our contracts.
4. Organize. The life blood of any Labor Organization is to organize work in its jurisdiction. In 2009, we will continue to leverage employers to sign our Term Agreements to protect workers in our industry.
5. Fund the IATSE Local 8 Pac. Our ability to participate in the political process unfortunately will depend on the money we have to spend. While I do not agree money should drive political policy, it is a reality we must face.
6. Increase AFL Participation. We now need more than ever to work with our fellow Brothers and Sisters in the Labor movement to protect working men and women.
7. Increase Technology to Communicate with Members. People today are demanding instant access to information. In 2009, the Office will be committed to introducing new and improved ways to communicate with our Membership.
8. Pass the Employee Free Choice Act. The single most important piece of legislation for the Labor Movement in the last 75 years.

I would like to thank all of the Members who work hard everyday to make our Local stronger. While we cannot predict the challenges 2009 will bring, we can find comfort knowing we have worked hard to prepare our union for those challenges.

Michael Barnes
Business Agent

Work

The Office continues to look for work in and out of our jurisdiction. Over 70 Local 8 members are working on the movies. Work opportunities were generated for local 8 Members in Washington for the Presidential Inauguration. Within our jurisdiction, we are pecking away at Hotel jobs. This month, we completed a three week installation of an Exhibit at the Constitution Center and sent members to work at 30th Street Station for the Obama Train Ride to Washington. Members are asked to develop work opportunities by keeping an eye out for work in the Hotels. A list of hotel ballrooms and their location is being constructed and will be sent out. If you see AV work being performed by non-union workers, call an Officer. Our plan is to aggressively pursue and if needed picket to get these jobs to get our members work. We are also generating a list of non-union theater and shop venues and the contact information. We intend to use the slow time of the year for Local 8 to infiltrate some of these non-union venues. No one knows when the economy will turn around. This union will not wait but rather work harder to succeed.

Contracts

As reported, we are in negotiations with over thirty Local 8 Employers for Term Agreements. The decision by RPAC to take over management of the Merriam this July has initiated early dialog and may result in early negotiations. The deal at the Merriam expired December 31st and the deal at RPAC expires 6/30/09. The City Wide contract the Local has with Clear Channel expired 12/31/2008. This contract covers work at the Tower, Penns Landing, The Parkway and Stadiums. Meetings to negotiate this deal are being scheduled. The Liacouras Center Contract expires 2/28/2009. We are scheduled to meet with this Employer in January. We are also negotiating with over two dozen AV and Production Shops whose contracts expired 12/31/2009. Members working under these contracts will be contacted by the Office to provide input for negotiations. If you are not contacted and have input email or drop off your proposal to the Office. A list of the contract being negotiated can be found on the last page of this Newsletter.

Building

Drawings for the new IATSE training Facility are nearly complete. Settlement on the land is scheduled to take place this month and bids for the General Contractor are scheduled to take place in February. As a result of the Water Department requirements for rain water run-off, the design now includes a "Green Roof". While it was not in our original plan to have a Green Roof, the result will be an overwhelming public relations success for the Local.

IT Website/EmailBlast/Text Blast and Robocall

IATSE Local 8 can now send out mass Text messages. Text messages will be delivered to the member's cell phone number. In order to get text messages, the member must provide to the Office their cell phone number and provider, and allow text message broadcast alerts to be sent to their phone. The member's cell phone plan must allow text messaging or they will not receive the text message. Sending the text message is free, but members may be charged a standard text message fee by their cell phone provider to receive the message on their phone. The text fee depends on the member's cell phone service plan. Members can opt to not receive text message alerts in their user settings.

If you want to receive Text messages from the Office, Email your information to mbarnes@iatse8.com 1. Cell Phone Number and 2. Cell Phone Provider (e.g. Verizon).

We have also gotten a bid to install a Robocall feature that will be brought back for a vote to the membership at our next meeting. Robocall will allow the Office to send out messages by phone quicker with more information about the job. These two features will also help with getting in contact with members for add on or replacement jobs.

The website continues to be updated. The Contract Page contains the updated versions of all your contracts. We have sent out 571 email blast since March of 2006 to members who have given us their email address. The new Checks in the Pouch Feature is updated weekly and also includes W2 information this time of year.

Our goal is to provide our membership more information quicker. We will continue to look for new ways to improve the way we communicate with our membership and welcome any suggestions.

Budget

The Membership ratified the 2009 Local 8 Budget. The final 2008 numbers are being calculated and will be sent out to the membership. Both budgets have been dramatically impacted by the cost associated with the Department of Labor Investigation brought on by the letter sent by one of our members.

IATSE 8 PAC Fund.

The Pac Fund currently has approximately \$3175 deposited in an account. A voluntary contribution form will be being sent out to the members for those people interested in supporting the PAC. This is a voluntary contribution. Monies in the PAC will be spent based on the will of the majority of the membership of Local 8. PAC Forms will also be emailed and available for downloading at the Local 8 website.

Proof Productions.

For the past two weeks, 27 employees at Proof Productions have been building a 21-foot-tall float that will honor organized labor in the Inauguration Day Parade. Proof Productions will join 99 other organizations marching in the Presidential Inauguration parade. Proof Productions has built plenty of floats for Christmas and Mummies parades but this one stands out because it'll be representing American workers. Union leaders said they believed this was the first time organized labor will be represented in an inauguration parade. The float was commissioned by major labor unions the AFL-CIO; Change to Win; and the National Education Association. Proof Production Carpenters built a steel framework in the center of a truck to support a gigantic plywood American flag with rotating stars and covered the cab with a matching vinyl flag design. 20 two-dimensional faces were added, including an office worker who bears a slight resemblance to the future president. Carvers turned a 9-foot by 12-foot chunk of foam into four workers' faces, a larger-than-life sculpture reminiscent of their original idea, Mount Rushmore. This project gives our Local International recognition and demonstrates the quality of the workers in Local 8.

Benefits

I am sure no one needs to be informed the cost of Health Care continues to increase beyond our ability keep up. We will continue to monitor the increases and how it is effecting our members while we hope our new President will be able to deliver on his promise to address this national dilemma. Participants are encouraged to visit the iatsenbf website. Important announcements and information is posted. For those people with 'Other Coverage', check your statement to make sure you provided the Fund with proof of your "Other Coverage". If you do not, you will be enrolled automatically and lose money that could be applied to your medical reimbursement. The Fund Office has also dramatically improved its response capabilities. I wish I could say the same for the Medical Reimbursement Office which I have been told and have experienced myself to be difficult to communicate with. Members also can check their Annuity choices on-line. Given my own choices, I am the last person to give advice. But it is wise to check your investment choices and make informed decisions. Any member 65 or older should get up to speed with where they stand with their Pension. If you need assistance, call the Office.

The following contracts have expired and are in negotiations. The employers written in Bold/Underlined have signed off on the local's Term Agreement.

Forrest Theater
West River
Merriam/Boyd
Lights of Liberty
Weber Priante
DMK Rittenhouse
EFC Outdoor
Houser Audio
EFC Penns Landing
Nu Millenium
EFCTower
Best Boy Audio
Camden County Parks
AVSC
Provision
AVMG
Murphy Productions
Swank

Earls Girls
IPG
LAStageCall
PSAV
Light Action
Namic
Creative Tech.
VTG
NYCDA
NMR
SkyCam
ESM
Spellcasters
Liacouras Center
Sound Investments
Total Media Solutions
Visual Aids Electronics
Channel Six

Congratulations

Mr. and Mrs. Butch Gallo on the birth of their daughter Marie

Lou and Patricia Vargo on the birth of their son Lou

