



US Education Secretary Arne Duncan unveiled grants to retrain workers June 4 at MATC. Personal testimony of education providing fresh careers and lives came from the crowd, including (right) a former Delphi worker, UAW member now student Dorothy Bringe.



The HIRE Center's Roger Hinkle (left) shares a laugh with AFL-CIO's Mike Balistriere and United Way's Betsy Rourke at the center's regular breakfast roundtable of organizations and companies pursuing employment strategies. Other participants included WE Energies, Valassis, Cargill, UWM, U.S. Cellular and the Medical College.



Host CEO Donald Sykes (left) welcomes MPS board chair Michael Bonds to a reception in his honor at the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board. Bonds talked about education and jobs before a large crowd (below, including such labor leaders as Sheila Cochran). Story on Page 3



Rescuing the worker

HIRE Center feels the blows land day by day

By Dominique Paul Noth, Editor, Labor Press

Milwaukee's current labor history painfully unfolds in the monthly roster of Rapid Response Intervention Requests at the HIRE Center.

START WITH THE FIRST WEEK OF MARCH 2009:

- Privatizing of food service at Milwaukee County's Behavioral Health units costs 50 AFSCME members their jobs. Retraining (for those not moved through union efforts to other county jobs) is quickly scheduled for HIRE evaluation.

- Waukesha Engine and Waukesha Foundry separately announce layoffs, requiring coordination by HIRE with Waukesha's workforce board since layoffs impacted some 45 union members in Milwaukee County (IAMAW and USW), some requiring the Spanish linguistics HIRE has.

- Universal Brixius' closing displaced 60 non-union workers, triggering HIRE special assistance because some jobs were trade affected, going to other countries.

Reading this roster is a different way of learning about our community. Sure, the plant closings and layoffs were thick and bad in the late 1990s and early 2000s. But the whole process and the success of HIRE response were largely ignored in the headlines.

Many companies involved were big and famous but easy use of credit cards disguised how many people were really out of work. The media got away with short-hand on the human cost. In those days of large assembly lines and large service providers, TV news only had to rattle off the names of a few brands and companies to outline the problem: Kohl Foods, Tower Automotive, 440th Air Wing, Delphi.

Today, faced with the worst economic meltdown since the 1930s, the media hasn't kept up with both the big dislocations and certainly not the mom and

pop disruptions.

A sad reality of systemic economic downturn is that even as the economy climbs back, the last thing to return are jobs. People thrown out of work are difficult to assess, educate, re-motivate and re-train into new skills. They are often the most disbelieving and devastated.

The first months of 2009 brought more horrible news -- layoffs, closings or bankruptcies affecting the likes of M&I Banks, Circuit City, Schwartz Bookstores, GE Healthcare, Harley-Davidson, Boston Stores, Midwest Airlines, Rexnord, and Columbia St. Mary's.

Much of the media couldn't keep up. Instead it nitpicked. Even as a new president galvanized federal action and taxpayer money to restore consumer loans and business credit, and brought the only economic power left -- the taxpayer -- into the fray, news reports seemed to decide too fast what wasn't working, without explaining to the public how long it would take before anything worked.

The failures of past leadership were so great that it was no longer enough to tread water. America had to re-invent the system. It must have private companies that reflect on and respond intelligently to shortcomings. It must escape simplistic partisan attitudes. It must force workers who never thought about retraining to embrace it.

Enter the HIRE Center, currently on the second floor of the MATC Job Enterprise Center South at 816 W. National Ave.

THE NEXT TWO WEEKS OF MARCH 2009 BROUGHT:

- Liberty Mutual's closing of an underwriting group, throwing 40 employees out of work.

- Production layoffs at Tramont Corp., represented by UE Local 1103, involving 70 workers.

HIRE continued Page 6

Suddenly, nation's concern is the auto worker

By Dominique Paul Noth
Editor, Labor Press

From an object of vilification because of union efforts to protect retirees and good wages, the American auto worker has become a national subject of sympathy and respect.

The appreciation coincides with new insight into the necessity of US auto manufacturing -- no longer one-in-six American jobs but still mighty important -- and into the decades of self-immolation by GM and Chrysler management and dealership executives.

In the first week of June, as his special plans for bankruptcy unfolded, President Obama sent his cabinet around the country to reveal plans aimed at retraining the thousands of auto and related industry workers and communities that would be in deep pain. Yes, he would save thousands of jobs but yes, thousands more would be lost and require assis-



Gov. Doyle joined Duncan at the MATC announcement.

tance into new jobs.

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan came to Milwaukee's MATC, where dislocated United Auto Workers members were already being trained, to announce \$7 million in competitive second-career grants emphasizing community and tech college courses for workers, families and communities struggling from the auto job losses.

As Duncan spoke of "educating our way" out of the eco-

omic crisis inherited by Obama, Gov. Doyle promised the state would be "first in line" to win the stimulus and education funds.

Simultaneously, Labor Secretary Hilda Solis went to Colorado to detail how \$500 million of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will be used to jump-start careers in the renewable energy and efficiency sectors -- including \$50 million for communities battered by the restructuring of the auto industry.

The new activity took the state from despair over permanently losing Detroit's Big Three, with the GM closing in Janesville and Chrysler's in Kenosha, to glimmers of hope, not just in the retraining money but in maneuvers that gave the state a chance -- maybe a 30% chance, maybe more -- to win back production.

Janesville is now one of

UAW continued Page 4

This is the year to help State Fair-goers appreciate the Union Label

There's a special call for help from locals and unions as the Union Label Committee prepares to set up and staff its Wisconsin State Fair Union Label Booth in the enormous state fair display building from Thursday, August 6, through Sunday, August 16.

Willie D. Ellis, president of

the Milwaukee Area Labor Council and chair of the committee, is urging unions to offer money, giveaways and booth operators. He points out that both the labor council and the state AFL-CIO, usually the main contributors, have taken financial hits this year, as have so many companies employing union workers.

Now is the time for unions to reach deep to help cover the \$5,500 cost of rental, insurance, entry tickets for the volunteers who staff the booth and the purchase of selective giveaways that allow unions to put their best foot forward at the fair.

All contributions are tax deductible when made to the LaborCommunity@Work, the council's nonprofit 501(c)3.

Once again the booth will be

the early-bird display spot for the Harley-Davidson motorcycle that will be raffled off at Laborfest on Sept. 7. Raffle tickets for the bike will be sold at the fair by the union members and retirees who work in shifts throughout the exposition. Individual locals often sign up for a day of shifts and volunteers are given tickets for admission to the fair. The shift times are 9 a.m. to noon, noon to 3:30 p.m., 3:30-7 p.m. and 7-10 p.m.

To reserve dates or for other information, contact Robin at the MALC offices, (414) 771-7070, robin@milwaukeeelabor.org.

Ellis, organizer and business rep at Operating Engineers Local 139, encourages other unions to contact their internationals and leaders to help with money and providing the products the booth is famous for giving out to thousands of visitors. This year the booth is also a special occasion to show the "made in USA" flag and talk up the opportunities of organized labor.

Checks can be made out to LaborCommunity@Work and marked "booth" and sent to MALC, Suite 110, 633 S. Hawley Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53214.

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While this fair gives you resources

A special Resource Fair will take place all day Thursday, July 9, at 633 S. Hawley Rd.

The sponsor is the Milwaukee Area Labor Council's Community Services Committee. The fair offers help to union members and their families who may be experiencing or know people experiencing hardships in these troubling times.

Participants lined up for the 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. fair at the building's Yatchak Hall are SHARE, the United Way, the Social Security Administration, the Veterans Affairs office, the HIRE Center, the 211 phone assistance service, the WRTP/BigStep Center of Excellence, WisCOSH, Budget Counseling Services and Milwaukee County Health and Human Services. More participants will be announced.

Calendar

For updated master list of events, visit www.milwaukeeelabor.org

Sunday, June 28

Free Hearing Tests

Related to worker's compensation
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10 a.m. to 4 p.m., WisCOSH offices
1023 S. 5th St..

Monday, June 29

Laborfest Planning Meeting, 5 p.m.

Yatchak Hall, 633 S. Hawley Rd.

Wednesday, July 1

Monthly Delegate Meeting

6:30 p.m., Serb Hall, 5101 W. Oklahoma Ave.

Thursday, July 9

Labor Council Resource Fair

Participants include SHARE, the United Way, the Social Security Administration, HIRE Center, WRTP/BigStep, WisCOSH, Milwaukee County Health and Human Services.
8 a.m. to 6 p.m, Yatchak Hall, 633 S. Hawley Rd.

Wednesday, July 29

Executive Board Meeting, 2 p.m.

Yatchak Hall, 633 S. Hawley Rd.

Wednesday, August 5

Monthly Delegate Meeting

6:30 p.m., Serb Hall, 5101 W. Oklahoma Ave.

Thursday, Aug. 6-16

Union Label Booth, State Fair



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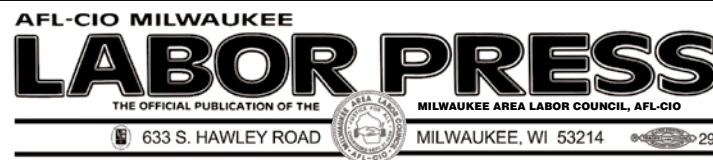
Mr. William Mattison, Allis Chalmers

Mrs. Mary O'Neal, General Electric

Mr. Herbert H. Gray, Milwaukee Public Schools

Ms. Latanya Howard, Milwaukee Public Schools

Mrs. Louvenice Travis McGlothian, Association of Commerce



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Jobs, MPS and fate intersect at Bonds event

By **Dominique Paul Noth**
Editor, Labor Press

Politically and even ideologically diverse group of civic leaders gathered at MAWIB -- the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board headquarters at 27th and North -- on June 10 for a catered, jazz-flavored reception honoring Michael Bonds, the Milwaukee Public Schools Board's new choice as chairman.

Underlying this festive fancy -- with welcome speeches by Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett and CEO Donald Sykes and an embrace of Bonds by the former chairman, Peter Blewett -- were a couple of fascinating realities.

First, the event magnified the important connection between public school education and job creation and training. That was reflected in location and the range of those invited -- from City Hall, the county, various educational institutions, unions and businesses.

Summer intern joins MALC shop



Ethan Erickson

A summer intern - also college student -- is busy helping the Milwaukee Area Labor Council, working out of its offices to support union causes and campaigns in between studies at Cornell University.

Ethan Erickson knows Milwaukee. He graduated from Wauwatosa East High School as salutatorian and was involved in everything from tennis to tutoring to STAND, the group fighting genocide in Darfur.

The honor student is now a sophomore at Cornell pursuing a degree in industrial and labor relations, with minors studying inequality, the law and society.

Erickson says his career goals are "to utilize both the public and private sector to help eliminate poverty and reduce income inequality and to facilitate the reduction of anger and emotion that is abundant in labor relations."

He is looking forward to learning more about the activities and range of Milwaukee's labor community. You can contact him at (414) 793-4383, email ece33@cornell.edu or through the MALC offices, (414) 771-7070.

Second was the undercurrent of change - even change for change's sake - that MPS will have to undergo and why Bonds may be the most respected leader, having emerged in two years as the firecracker who spins off ideas, memos and budget proposals ceaselessly and will work every corner of the room.

He has also been appointed to a role that some read as the end of his own "reign," an eventual reduction or elimination of the school board's existence. Bonds is one of seven on the advisory council for MPS created by Gov. Jim Doyle and Mayor Tom Barrett, after they released a surprisingly lame and "been there-done that" McKinsey Report on how the schools could save money. Both governor and mayor deny the advisory council is a stalking horse for city or state takeover of MPS, though several at the Bonds event saw it as just that.

The teachers union, MTEA, does openly question why the advisory council tilts so strongly to choice school supporters, though part of that is a probably facile reading of the innovation sought by the new president, Barack Obama, and his chosen point person, the former leader of the Chicago schools now secretary of education, Arne Duncan.

MTEA has wondered aloud why its recommendation of Bob Peterson for the council was turned down. Peterson is a local 5th grade teacher but also nationally recognized leader on "Rethinking Schools," also the



Bonds chats with Ald. Willie Wade (right) as the community's movers and shakers streamed into this reception.

name of the magazine he has contributed to.

In fact his writings are apparently known to Duncan, who is not so much about voucher schools but about charter schools and breaking the mold. Most choice school concepts in Milwaukee do suffer from looking moldy.

The makeup of the advisory council came even as the state Assembly recognized that more money for choice under the current formula would rob the MPS of revenue. That was a main

driver in the Assembly decision to cap enrollment in choice schools at its current level of 19,500 (cutting 3,000 from the immediate future). The budget painfully reduces funding for all students but this cut reflects what many choice leaders now agree on, that hard evidence is lacking that choice does better in general terms than public schools. Choice advocates have also promised but not yet delivered on the academic openness of public schools.

And yet, Duncan made

something as clear as a threat on a visit to Milwaukee the first week in June when he quietly spoke to many local leaders. He controls a large brace of federal stimulus money and public school grants that won't come MPS' way until it reflects radical reform and change. Some of that may even be new clothes on old ideas but clearly Duncan wants MPS to breathe fresh air from every pore, including upending current administration and MTEA structure and guidelines.

And hence the emphasis on Bonds. Like Duncan he bleeds passion for education and pushes all sides for ideas.

The board is also about to choose a new superintendent. Under Bonds it must convince Doyle and the state legislature on funding issues.

So at this political juncture, Bonds is the necessary face of change. And - shades of the old magnet schools approach - he used this reception to announce a middle school to be modeled after the International Baccalaureate model of Rufus King High School (once again Wisconsin's top high school in a Newsweek poll).



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UAW From Page 1

three locations in the running to build GM's new compact and subcompact cars. Chrysler has put Kenosha's plant back in play for Fiat's smaller engines, though more than a year down the road.

The odds are long, but Chrysler-Fiat certainly has something to prove to US taxpayers while Janesville's chances elevated in June when Tennessee officials accused GM of a three-state bidding war (Tennessee, Michigan, Wisconsin) to win compact car production once promised to China.

Tennessee's balking at GM's push for government incentives was particularly laughable, since Tennessee paid big to land Saturn production, then big again to convert Saturn into Chevrolet production -- and paid even bigger to land major centers for Volkswagen and Nissan.

Kenosha may be back on the table because Chrysler-Fiat has a public relations black-eye from its behavior toward Wisconsin, reflected in its letters of sheepish apology to state offi-

cial. National news reports and Labor Press' own investigation also reveal the company misled (some would say flat lied) to elected officials, the UAW and even Obama's auto taskforce when it announced it would close the Kenosha plant next year. While openly discussing its assembly plant in Saltillo, Mexico, it failed to point out a newly finished engine production plant right next door to take in the Kenosha work.

Because of that, the bankruptcy discussion here did not center on how many auto jobs were being saved but on how the move to Mexico would be "a direct violation and outrage to Obama's intentions in the recovery program," noted John Drew, who is not only a member of the UW board of regents but also UAW's regional representative in southeast Wisconsin and a former president of the Kenosha local.

It was amusing, Drew conceded, to suddenly hear conservative talk radio say great things about the UAW, whose workers clearly took deep cuts in pay and benefits -- as they actually had been doing unnoticed for two years. The sacrifice was genuine, but the radio was also engaged

in crocodile tears, since the Kenosha-to-Mexico episode became simply another opportunity to beat up on Obama.

Talk radio neglected to remind listeners that the GOP push for bankruptcy would not have saved thousands of auto industry jobs -- but would have liquidated all workers and dealers, not to mention crippling US suppliers.

While Drew thinks the Obama team should have been more suspicious about Chrysler management, he also points out that "what Obama has done just to keep the companies in business is a remarkable thing in the annals of bankruptcy."

Obama moved the workers forward in line to have a strong voice. He didn't just protect the moneyed interests, which may be what is upsetting conservative talkers.

Nor has much of the media gotten the details right.

"It's not UAW that has a 55% voting share in these companies," Drew said. "It's the retiree benefit fund, an independent entity where we do have a strong voice. But the corporate lawyers didn't want to see a world where the retirees were protected. How amazing that the



Key players in job training, education and fighting to keep auto jobs in the state showed up June 14 at a private fund-raiser for Rep. Gwen Moore, shown with one of the hosts, UAW leader John Drew. State AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Phil Neuenfeldt (below left) brought along a major Doyle ally in the fight to keep GM in Janesville: Assembly Speaker Mike Sheridan, former president of the UAW local there. Also snapped circulating (below) were Mayor Tom Barrett (left) and new MPS board member Larry Miller.



president did anyway."

Fiat, which really controlled these Chrysler decisions, is in a hard place that may help Kenosha. Fiat wants the US market and the US dealers network -- and while you can't expect an Italian company to care as much about American workers as the UAW does, it does care about public perception.

It worries about Congress and the reality that Fiat can't be the new Chrysler without US taxpayers and elected officials. So inquiries from Congress will affect the future and "Kenosha may not be in her district but Gwen Moore has been pitch perfect in her questions," Drew noted.

Milwaukee Rep. Moore and Sen. Herb Kohl have been ham-



mering away at Chrysler-Fiat for not taking advantage of the \$25 billion in retooling stimulus money that the Obama administration has made available - and Kenosha retooling might use less than \$450 million of that.

The Obama version of controlled bankruptcy, despite efforts to derail it, gives a dominant chance of recouping to the taxpayers, saves a considerable number of jobs and puts teeth into the long-dormant training programs of the federal government. So retraining, retooling and greening are hot. So is the auto worker and a new vision of American manufacturing after decades of neglect and bad practice.

Said Drew, "My main viewpoint of this president is that Obama came 25 years too late."

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Attempt to extend sick leave to victims of domestic abuse forces supporters of city ordinance to appeal to higher court

On one thing Judge Thomas Cooper was right. At the May hearing on the case in Milwaukee Circuit Court, Cooper mused from the bench that he would be far from the last word - that however he ruled, the other side was bound to appeal.

Few expected he would support just about everything in the sick leave ordinance except the curb on domestic violence.

Cooper was dealing with the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce's lawsuit to stop what nearly 70% of city voters supported last November -- mandating private employers to provide a minimum of paid sick days. Statistics indicated that the lack of paid sick leave particularly impacted working mothers with low-paying jobs. Reporting also revealed a surprising number of companies that would make employees

quit rather than giving them time for sick children.

Considerable legal talent and supportive briefs had been lined up on both sides, noted Cooper, for MMAC and by 9to5, the working women organization that had led the campaign.

Sure enough, when Cooper on June 12 ruled in favor of the MMAC, an immediate appeal was promised by the legion of supporters for the ordinance.

Curiously enough, the newspaper normally quickly posts copies of police complaints and court decisions at jsonline. But it didn't do so with Cooper's 39-page decision. Jsonline simply provided a video from the winning side and promoted a forum where a number of suburban dwellers could rant against paid sick days.

If the newspaper had posted the decision promptly, readers would have discovered that rul-

ing did not support MMAC on any of its major issues but decided that including domestic violence as a reason for time off stretched the legal bounds. The judge did not sever the offending minor element because he interpreted that he didn't have the power under the state rules - and then suggested that the Common Council had the power.

So ironically, preference for employees coughing into a customer's soup was the first salvo against the ordinance. And the recent one that MMAC was left to proudly embrace was not allowing protection from domestic violence.

Certainly, despite the MMAC hysterics, cost never seemed an issue, since it was minimal. In general terms and with other restraints and monitoring, the ordinance limits the benefit to nine days for workers in large companies and five days for workers in small businesses. It also sets a one-hour gain in paid time for every 30 hours worked, which means it would take a couple of months for most workers to earn one day off.

Since the Milwaukee ordinance passed, the paid sick day movement has made major gains.

Several states are far down the road in passing their own versions, which apparently do not raise constitutional issues. Wisconsin may well follow suit as a state.

And most notable is the Healthy Families Act, a federal bill wending its way through Congress with major support. Not just from members of the House and

Senate.

Another backer is Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett, who opposed a sick day ordinance limited to the city.

So whatever the appeal results in the Milwaukee case, the city ordinance so broadly supported by the citizens emerges as the start of a national movement, not a closing chapter

-- Dominique Paul Noth

Junemann seeks national labor post

A regular participant in labor council forums has thrown his hat into the ring for secretary-treasurer of the national AFL-CIO.

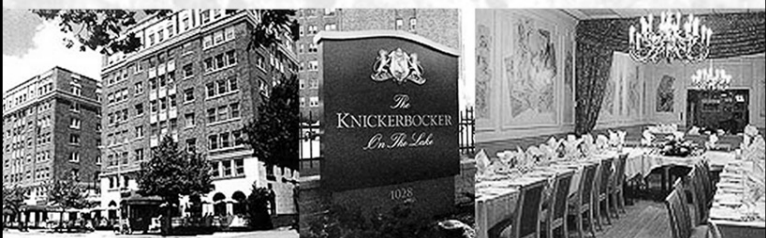
Greg Junemann, who leads the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, and every week commutes from his home in Bay View to D.C., told his union June 6 that he will run to replace Richard Trumka, the current secretary-treasurer who is considered a leading candidate to replace John Sweeney, who has announced that he is stepping down as president.

All the offices will be up for



Greg Junemann election in September at the national AFL-CIO conference. Junemann has also been a member for four years of the AFL-CIO executive council.

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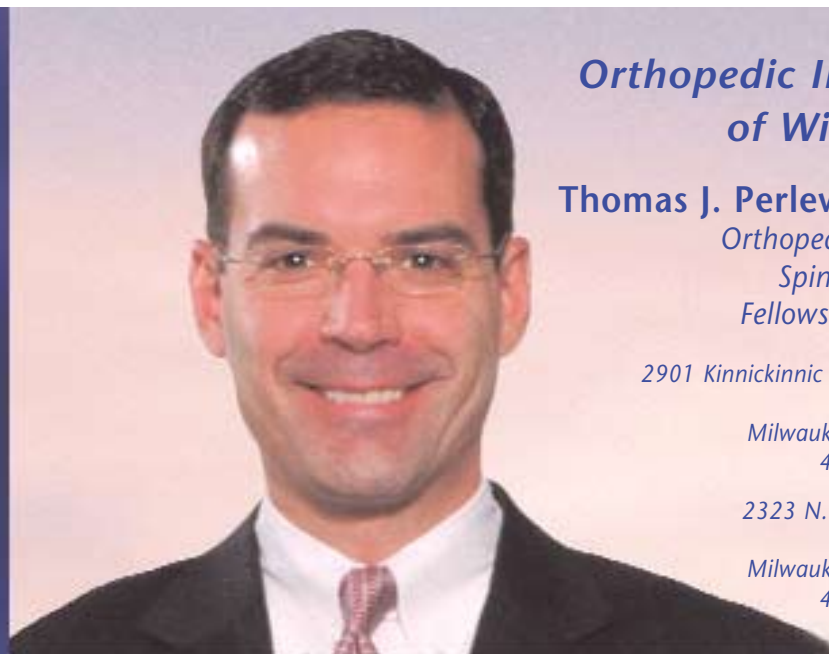
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HIRE

From Page 1

• Shutdowns at La Causa, which said most of the 87 workers affected would be hired by new contractors, so it did not request HIRE assistance, though several worker informally inquired.

The HIRE Center staff is overworked and can occasionally be overwhelmed by the pressure, but many in the staff were dislocated workers themselves and they know they have a system that succeeds.

Recognizing the depth of the current economic disaster, government support of Milwaukee's job needs has grown in size (\$10 million plus so far flowing this way with millions more in the pipeline) and efficiency (90% of the money to programs). Private support is there but state and federal government is the runaway leader, throwing multiple funding streams and complicated math into the equation.

But to simplify, with the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board (WIB) under CEO Donald Sykes as a champion and conduit, HIRE has seen funding for various programs rise and faster response to its request for special grants and assistance.

HIRE employees through WIB increased from three last year to five today, MATC has

doubled its teaching hours in the learning lab. The union supported LETC (Labor Education and Training Center) has gradually risen in case workers from 18 persons to nearly 24.

The HIRE Center earned this attention. For years it has scored at the top of the statistical charts in retraining workers into new careers and finding jobs close to the pay the workers lost.

Today the staff must combine empathy with ability, but it sorely seeks more companies that share its optimism and offer opportunities for a constant clientele, regularly meeting to press for hiring (see photo on Page 1).

THE LAST WEEKS OF MARCH:

• US Bank closed its adjustment department, affecting 33 non-union workers.

• Actual Power Packer's closing, again triggering federal job-loss aid, impacted 35 workers.

• The bankruptcy of Central States Mortgage forced a court appointed receiver and cost 107 jobs.

• Bright Horizons, the closed children's center, dislocated 15 workers.

HIRE would like to be out of business. Its staff dreams of a Utopia where no company fails and no worker is in trouble. But in the best of circumstances -- and right now it has its friendliest government ear in decades -- the number of dislocated will soar over



At the Workforce Investment Board reception for Michael Bonds (see Page 3), the HIRE Center's busy director, Alba Baltodano, chats with MATC's Duane Schultz.

the next few years. The center may actually have to expand its facilities in both size and locations, something well understood and debated within it operating consortium (unions, educational institutions, community underwriters and government).

The state Department of Workforce Development feeds the federal funds, and adds some of its own. Long pleased with HIRE's efficiency, it now seems happier with the newly active WIB that helps steer the funds and growth through City Hall, Mayor Tom Barrett and CEO Sykes. But the beat of closings goes on.

FIRST WEEKS OF APRIL:

• A second round of reductions at Rexnord/Falk affected 54 workers, but HIRE was not

called in by the company.

• Continuing layoffs at Stainless Foundry brought HIRE action for 30 affected workers.

• IAMAW workers (machinists union) at Advance Die Casting were affected by substantial rolling layoffs, while 30 layoffs due to relocation hit Adaptive Microsystems.

Sometimes, for reasons hard to explain or even on occasion understand, companies and organizations don't take advantage of HIRE's rapid response or don't understand the depths of help it offers. But help it does anyway. It can't officially go in without company support, but workers do come to its library, job search center and educational outlets.

ALSO IN APRIL:

• A nursing home closing (Dove Health Care) will affect 144 workers through the summer, while through the year even more layoffs than previously announced at GE Healthcare could involve 179 workers.

• HIRE was informed that machinists (IAMAW) at Perlick face 30 layoffs. Also, 33 workers in Reader's Digest technology department will file for retraining, while "indefinite" suspension of production will shelve 94 workers at TSI Sportswear.

• HIRE was also asked to help with the 16 Milwaukee County residents dislocated by Cedarburg cutbacks at International Paper.

• Grede Foundries did not respond to HIRE's willingness to help in the new round of prolonged production layoffs affecting 81 workers.

The HIRE Center's intervention list just keeps accelerating. It not only reflects every reported plant closing in Milwaukee County (the folks required by law to inform the state) it sometimes learns about, finds, calls and mails information to workers laid off outside those legal parameters.

This produces an internal monthly record that some may regard as just statistics. Until you look more deeply.

MAY 2009:

• Guaranty Bank's closing of Brown Deer, Glendale and Milwaukee locations affected 62 employees.

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• The downsizing of WPS Healthcare affected 29 employees.

• UAW Local 9 joined HIRE in offering help in the downsizing of Dana Corp., affecting some 90 workers there.

• New laws help workers dislocated by jobs fleeing the US. So HIRE aids the filing for assistance in the outsourcing to the Philippines of the billing department of Roadrunner Freight, affecting more than 50 non-union jobs.

• Similar outsourcing, this time to India, affects a handful of workers at Amdocs, Inc.

These aren't just data sheets. This is a diary of family anxiety. Read inside the lines and see children who quit school to go to work or give up for now on dreams of college. See seniors no longer sure of family support as their health fades.

Think of meals now skipped or bought on the cheap or through food pantries.

Think of prescription drugs passed up just to feed the babies.

Consider the proud workers who still refuse anything smacking of handouts but desperate for real help in establishing new careers that won't abandon them.

Think of the belief in work that has now been replaced by mistrust in society.

This is emotional pain that the center's case workers must deal with even as they identify, evaluate and re-train the workforce.

This is the monthly journal of Milwaukee that no one wants to hear about.

JUNE 2009, NOT YET COMPLETED:

• Notifying state and federal officials, Metal Technologies said it would close its West Allis iron foundry, throwing some 215 employees out of work, most members of USW Local 2-69. The foundry once was a Briggs & Stratton division. Metal Technologies eliminated 83 jobs last year at another West Allis facility purchased from Briggs in the 1990s.

• Consolidation is also blamed in state documents for the permanent layoffs of some 45 people at Lehigh Phoenix's facility at 8111 N. 87th St. In both cases HIRE immediately went to work.

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And on.

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Immigrants may gain rights here and in D.C.

It could be a new day in sensible immigration reform and responsibility. June 8 with the White House involved, a powerful national coalition was unveiled, In Madison – with budget votes seesawing at Labor Press deadlines – state legislators were weighing two items: In-state tuition levels for immigrants brought to the US as children. Trackable driver IDs so that immigrant jobholders can legally use the highways and steer out of a permanent shadow existence.

National gains first. The AFL-CIO, Change to Win, the NAACP and La Raza, the national council for Hispanic rights, along with the Asian American Justice Center and 195 other groups, have joined with the National Immigration Forum to push an orderly comprehensive system to enforce labor standards, reunite families and

provide a clear path to citizenship for undocumented workers who register and survive background checks.

“Our nation’s broken immigration system isn’t working for anybody,” said AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Arlene Holt Baker. “Not for immigrant workers who are routinely exploited by companies and not for US born workers whose living standards are being undermined by the creation of a new underclass.”

“Reform of our current system is an integral part of our efforts to eliminate enormous social and economic inequalities here and around the world.”

In Wisconsin, common sense underlay the decision of the legislature’s Joint Finance Committee. It’s long been apparent that it was short-sighted – and robbing the state of better revenue -- to penalize those car-

ried across the border as infants and children. The refusal to recognize their success in schools limited many to low-paying jobs by frustrating college careers. They got no financial breaks.

Students without documents under the new rules would qualify for in-state tuition rates at public universities and technical colleges if they can prove several years of state residency and pledge to apply for permanent residence, along with some other conditions. If you look at the levels of success of many of these children in Wisconsin secondary schools, the approval would finally open affordable doors to some of the most talented higher-education candidates in the state.

Similarly, another overdue provision that could be in trouble in the Senate would make immigrants and refugees eligible for driver licenses – and was actually using the conservatives’ federal Real ID Act. The state of Utah of all places showed the way. Utah has raised \$1 million in annual revenue under Real ID rules by allowing limited purpose driver licenses to those who pass driving tests and pass other standards even if they are not able to provide proof of their legal status or receive a social security number.

The driver card could not be used for boarding an airplane or entering a federal building, but would be used for legal driving

and obtaining auto insurance.

It makes a heck of a lot more sense than having the roads loaded with jobholders who haven’t been tested or insured. Supporters also cited the increase in state revenue, along with a ripple effect in helping the auto industry and the general economy.

Now nothing is sure in the June jockeying of budget votes in the two houses of the state legislature, so as we went to press supporters of the driver license expansion felt betrayed at the last minute. But the arguments were persuasive.

Logic may also be winning at the national level. The coalition leaders all support a new approach to determining how many immigrant workers should come into the US labor market. Rather than relying on new temporary worker programs, an independent commission would assess labor market needs on an ongoing basis and determine the number of foreign workers to be admitted.

The campaign launched reformimmigrationforamerica.org to give advocates and supporters the latest news about immigration reform.

-- Dominique Paul Noth

A community haul for the homeless



Volunteers at United Way cart health and hygiene products to waiting homeless shelter vans and cars in a successful conclusion June 4 to the annual labor council Health and Hygiene Drive. Organizer Annie Wacker noted at a finale press conference that the need has actually grown over 20 years of this union project.

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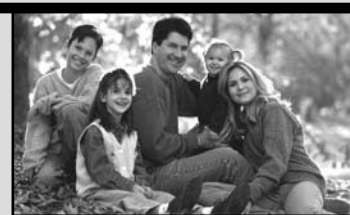
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City should sink its own breed of water pirates

By **Dominique Paul Noth**
Editor, Labor Press

Our pioneer founders blessed Milwaukee with proximity to Lake Michigan. A progression of civic leaders over a century blessed us with public attention and public workers to respond to water needs and treatment. All this developed an admired Water Works and a future where water is emerging as the main energy and environmental bargaining chip for the next century.

Unless some idiot buys into privatization schemes that take it all away.

Sure enough, some business leaders and their stooges never learn. They still don't believe it

Editorial

was their short-term quick-fix mentality that got America into the current economic trouble. They don't believe in a brighter future but in selling off assets as quickly as they can.

How else can one explain this push to privatize Milwaukee's water through a century-long lease?

Rather than work day in and out on the financial issues facing the city, rather than fighting for a better tomorrow or even a better next month, the scheme would sell off the public water for a half billion dollars over 99 years to create County Pension Scheme Light, an endowment of about \$25 million a year to theoretically help the property taxpayer, while actually destroying the city's revenue future.

The Water Works makes

money now, but the Public Service Commission frowns on using its excess profits to fund other city functions. But rather than address these issues, the lease option, as one alderman admits, would allow the private operators to stick it to the suburbs and the citizenry, making water deals not out of regional cooperation but to get the biggest bucks possible. Forget the inevitable political and legislative fallout from that.

Leasing would let a profit company set the rates, probably as high as they can get away with. While deals to privatize public resources and publicly-built utilities are crashing and burning around the country, the water lease idea would tie the city's hands and guarantee no one would be left alive to see the outcome 100 years from now.

The companies pursuing water deals are largely foreign,

and would use employees from outside the region. They would be layers removed from public response, unlike the city workers of today.

As Jack Norman, research director for the Institute for Wisconsin's Future, points out, the privateers could woo businesses with lower water rates while sticking residents with the highest rates. The city is already moving to spend taxpayer money on commission studies that would pay for concepts on how to privatize, not how NOT to privatize. An incentive to bad advice!

On June 15, KPOW (for Keep Public Our Water) gathered at City Hall to make waves against this waterlogged idea. (Wet puns are pretty much impossible to avoid in this issue.) Their petition with the facts is at www.thepetitionsite.com/3/Stop-Water-Privatization-Wisconsin.

One national opponent, Food & Water Watch, has already startled the privateers by discovering that the lease scheme requires a binding referendum by city voters.

And here's a frightening thought: Were it not for such watchdogs this privatization push would have been quietly moving ahead at City Hall, using taxpayer money to sell out the taxpayers.

In early committee votes, the Common Council has seen through the snake oil. But as one alderman told Labor Press, their votes may have put the lease idea on "life support." Yet it is not dead, not by a long shot.

It always sounds positive when politicians say they are

keeping their options open. Sure enough, Common Council President Willie Hines and some other aldermen have said it would be "irresponsible" for them to take the lease idea off the table.

If they examined the facts, the loopholes and the salivating privateers determined to siphon off Milwaukee's treasure, it becomes clear. The "responsible" approach is to drown this idea outright.

Feed the need at St. Ben's Sunday

It's Union Day once again at St. Ben's -- 5 p.m. Sunday, June 28, when the church basement dining hall opens to an annual tradition of feeding the needy and the homeless.

And once again the Milwaukee Area Labor Council seeks volunteers not only to serve but also most immediately to make financial donations.

A true summer cookout -- brats, hot dogs, beans, potato salad plus fruit, drink and dessert -- marks this highly anticipated meal. Union volunteers shop union stores for this event at St. Benedict the Moor Church at 9th and State Sts.

It is no secret that a harsh economic climate has made the demand grow, and that includes the need for money from locals and unions to help the AFL-CIO Community Services Committee and field liaisons with purchas-

es. Call Mike Balistriere at (414) 771-9829 or email mikeaflcio@sbcglobal.net to lend or confirm your support.



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