

Eastern Washington Machinists News



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Preparing for a New Contract at Pexco

Members at Pexco (formerly Filtrona Extrusions) in Yakima are gearing up for their second IAM union contract. Formal negotiations begin this fall, with the current contract expiring on November 30.

The 110 members at the plant produce



Business Rep Steve Warren (r) visits with member Gene Newton from Pexco at a solidarity barbecue on the upcoming negotiations.

plastic extrusion components for windows, automobiles and various other industries, as well as manufacturing aircraft parts for Boeing and Airbus planes.

To get members engaged in the negotiation process, Business Rep Steve Warren and Staff Assistant Ken Howard held a solidarity barbecue across the street from the plant earlier this summer. Throughout the day, members stopped by for lunch, asked questions and discussed issues. The event also provided an opportunity to nominate members for their in-plant negotiation subcommittee. For those who couldn't attend the barbecue, they



On August 10, members at Pexco elected shop floor representatives to serve on a negotiations subcommittee. Above, volunteers count the ballots.

had an opportunity to nominate for the in-plant subcommittee through forms on the bulletin boards.

On August 10, members elected shop floor representatives to serve as negotiations subcommittee. Gerald Phillips, Josua Travis,

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Hanford Machinists Come in From the Cold (and Heat)

by Todd A. Nelson,
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For the five machinists working at Hanford's Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF) performing maintenance on waste containers, working outside in the extreme temperatures is the worst.

In southeastern Washington, the winter-time temperatures routinely dip into the teens, and the summer-time temperatures regularly exceed 100 degrees. Add blowing dust to the mix and you can see why the machinists are ready to move into an enclosed, 11,550 square-foot maintenance facility. For most of the last 14 years, they've been working in the open. However, in 2006, they did get a three-sided 1,280 square-foot



Machinists Union members (l to r) Rick Alvey, Louie Mejia, Chuck Saberhagen, Josh Wright and Chris Siegfried maintain more than 850 25-ton-capacity waste containers at Hanford's Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility.

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Sweet Deliveries Thanks to the Skills of Dean Wohl

If you've ever enjoyed a Hostess snack cake purchased in Eastern Washington, chances are Machinist Union member Dean Wohl helped get it to the store. This talented automotive machinist is the lone mechanic who maintains the delivery trucks for Interstate Brands on the east side of the state.

Interstate is one of the companies that deliver Hostess cake products east of the Cascades. This means Dean has a lot of ground to cover.

For more than 16 years, Dean has diligently used his skills to keep the delivery trucks in top condition. He has adapted to many changes, taken on more assignments and watched the company emerge from bankruptcy much leaner.

"In better economic times when they were also delivering bread products, the company had two mechanics in Spokane, as well as employees in Ellensburg, Wenatchee and Omak," Dean recalled. "The products are now limited to Hostess cakes so there are fewer trucks and less mechanics covering the same geographic territory."

As a result, Dean has sole responsibility for keeping several dozen delivery trucks running and maintained.

He uses a simple philosophy that has made him successful: "I treat the fleet as if it were my own equipment. I stay caught up on preventive maintenance. I fix the most urgent needs first and determine if something else can wait an-



Machinists Dean Wohl maintains trucks for Interstate Brands that deliver Hostess Cakes throughout Eastern Washington.

other day. Knowing resources are limited, I spend as little as possible," stated Dean.

While his shop is located in Yakima, trucks are also based in Moses Lake and Spokane, so often he finds himself packing up his tools and heading out on the road.

Extreme weather conditions in Eastern Washington make it important to ensure the trucks do not break down so the integrity and quality of Hostess products are main-

tained. We all know chocolate and perishables don't fare well in 100+ degrees or in freezing temperatures.

"I'm not really on call 24/7, but if there's a problem, it's taken care of," Dean added, which is a testament to his dedication.

So the next time you bite into a delicious Hostess Twinkie, remember that Dean may have played a hand in ensuring it arrived a quality product.

Members at Central Pre-Mix Approve New Agreement

Members at Central Pre-Mix Concrete in Spokane and Pasco ratified a new three-year agreement on July 1. The contract, which was unanimously ratified, represents nine members who are charged with keeping the heavy equipment for the company in top running condition.

The new agreement secured wages and benefits for those employees for the next three years. These members are experts in their field – bringing either years of work experience or completing apprenticeships to offer journeyman level service.



In formal negotiations at Central Pre-Mix the Union side of the table (right side) consisted of Steward Casey Streeter, Business Rep Steve Warren and Staff Assistant Ken Howard.



Photo left: IAM members keep the heavy equipment in top running condition at Central Pre-Mix Concrete.

Photo right: L to R: Mike Brunner, Casey Streeter and Edgar Thompson count the ballots from the contract vote on July 1.



Hanford Machinists Come in From the Cold (and Heat)

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shop.

Where the current shop has covered space to work on only one container at a time, the new facility will have room to work on 12 containers at once.

The Container Maintenance Facility is one of three new facilities being constructed at ERDF. The new buildings are part of a \$100 million upgrade and expansion of ERDF made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

ERDF is an engineered disposal facility. It is where most of Hanford's cleanup wastes are disposed. Having the facility located within the boundaries of the 586-square-mile Hanford Site is one of the reasons disposal costs are as low as they are – around \$12.25 per ton including transportation – compared to about \$50 per ton,



This year, nearly 1.5 million tons of waste from the cleanup of the Hanford Site in southeastern Washington state will be disposed at the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility. The facility is designed to be expanded as needed. When the current expansion is completed (the area with the white liner), the expanded facility will cover an area equal to 52 football fields.

not including transportation, for a municipal landfill.

The Machinists' job is to maintain the 850, 20-ton-capacity, roll-on/roll-off containers used to transport contaminated materials from Hanford's waste cleanup sites to ERDF for disposal.

The waste disposal crew disposes about 400 containers of waste per day, with peaks expected to reach 650 in late summer, early fall. Maintaining the containers involves doing routine preventive maintenance, repairing or replacing seals, replacing beryllium seals and making structural welds.

Although ERDF does not accept liquid of any kind for disposal, the incoming waste is soil, dampened primarily from water for dust control. So the containers must be water-tight. That means one of the big jobs for the Machinists is repairing and replacing the seals. That's where the weather becomes the biggest chal-

lenge.

"In the winter, the glue takes twice as long to dry. In the summer, it dries out too fast or sets up too fast," said Chris Siegfried, a Washington Closure Hanford employee and Local 1951 council alternate. "Both conditions lead to an inadequate seal and slow production."

ERDF Operations Manager Jeff Armatrout said, "We're fortunate to have such skilled craftsmen on our team, and Recovery Act funds will allow us to provide a more proper work environment for them. There's no doubt our staff will be able to work more safely and be more productive if they're out of the extreme weather conditions we can get here in Eastern Washington."

Washington Closure manages the \$2.4 billion River Corridor Closure Project at the U.S. Department of Energy's Hanford Site. In addition to managing and expanding ERDF, Washington Closure is responsible for demolishing 486 contaminated buildings and cleaning up 370 waste sites.

ERDF was built in 1996 to receive Hanford cleanup wastes. It was designed to be expanded as needed and is undergoing its fourth and largest expansion. Once the expansion is completed it will have a total capacity of more than 16 million tons. Nearly 10 million tons of contaminated material has been disposed there already.



Local 1951 member Josh Wright stencils new ID numbers on a waste container.

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Celebrating 75 Years with Solidarity Barbecues

Throughout Eastern Washington, Machinists Union members helped District 751 celebrate 75 years of building a better community with barbecues that involved the entire family, as well as retirees. Events were held in Spokane, Wenatchee, Grand Coulee and Yakima and those attending were entered in free drawings to win Union prizes.



District Secretary-Treasurer Susan Palmer (l) and Local 86 President John Kofol congratulate the winner of an IAM gold watch at the Spokane barbecue.



"On Tap" provided live entertainment and music at several of the barbecues. Local 86 Member



Darrin Truitt
(2nd from right with guitar) works at
Triumph Composites in Spokane.



Families enjoy the Local 86 barbecue in Spokane.



The food line at the Spokane barbecue.



Above: One of the kids play with the Union frisbees on the lawn.
Families enjoyed Local 1951's barbecue in Yakima.



Photo right:
Don and
Carol Bryan
enjoyed
the Yakima
barbecue.
Don works
at Rabanco
in Golden-
dale



Above: The Yakima barbecue was the first Union event Phillip Robillard (center) has attended since retiring from Timpe Machine in 1989. He has been an IAM member since 1959.

Left: The Yakima barbecue drew a large crowd of members, their families and retirees.

Celebrating 75 Years with Solidarity Barbecues



Local 1123 President Jim O'Brien holds up the cake.



In Wenatchee, Fred McNeil (l), Jim O'Brien (center) and another member cook up the meat for the barbecue.



Members at Grand Coulee enjoyed the chance to get together with co-workers and family for a Union event.

Photo below: At the Local 1951 picnic in Yakima members enjoy the food while Business Rep Jon Holden (center standing) talks with a member.

Photo right: In Wenatchee, members and their families enjoyed the barbecue.



One of the children attending the barbecue in Grand Coulee drew the raffle prize tickets.



Steward John Berland won an IAM gold watch at the Grand Coulee barbecue.



Photo left: District Secretary-Treasurer Susan Palmer (l) and Steward Sam Jensen from Pexco enjoy the barbecue in Yakima.



Karen and Brad Davis at Local 1951 barbecue.

Members at Pexco Prepare for a New Contract

Continued from front page

Mitchel Griffith and Brian Ripley were elected for these positions. Stewards Jack Clinton and Dave Bailey will serve on the actual negotiating committee and be present at all bargaining sessions.

"It is great to have a shop floor committee that meets with Union Stewards on the negotiations to discuss issues from each department. The more people involved in different aspects of the shop, the better we

represent the membership," stated Business Rep Steve Warren.

"Holding the barbecue across the street, got more people involved, gave an opportunity to provide input and get questions answered. More participation makes us stronger going into negotiations," stated Steward Wayne Griffith. "I believe health insurance and pensions will be a top issue in the contract since they keep raising rates and many of us want to see cost controls because we use our insurance."

"The barbecue was a good way to get everyone together and to start thinking about the contract," added member Mike Brienceno, who has worked at the facility for the past three years. "Personally, I hope in the next contract we clarify more of the language to spell out our



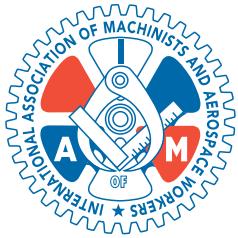
A barbecue across the street from the Pexco plant was a great way to build solidarity and get members talking about contract issues. The current contract expires on November 30.



Member volunteers from Pexco count the ballots as members wait to learn the results. Staff Assistant Ken Howard (standing r) observes.

rights on issues such as overtime. That is one issue that comes to mind as needing stronger, clearer language."

Members enjoyed the chance to talk about the contract and meet with Union leaders. Union negotiators have set up a tentative bargaining schedule with the goal of providing members several days to review the new contract before voting on the final offer.



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Spokane Members 'Secure' for Senator Murray

When Senator Patty Murray recently held a rally in Spokane, she knew who to contact for assistance – the Machinists Union. Six members from Local 86 stepped up and volunteered to serve as her security detail – Lance Hoopes, John Kofol, Dale Ronquille, Bob Six, Gary Swartz and John Warren.

Senator Murray has always supported us - fighting for workers, for jobs, on health care, for seniors and to stop corporate greed. This was a chance to give her support as she fights for re-election this fall.

Our challenge will be to mobilize our members and ensure the thousands of workers vote. If you would like to volunteer to help with the get-out-the-vote effort, call 1-800-763-1301, ext. 3305.



Above: Local 86 Machinists Union members who served as security for the rally. L to R: Dale Ronquille, Senator Murray, John Kofol, Bob Six, Lance Hoopes, John Warren and Gary Swartz.

Photo left: Senator Murray speaking at a recent rally in Spokane, where Local 86 members served as security.