

October USW News

Brothers and Sisters,

In September we brought on board ten new Shell employees. Seven of these went to the operations ranks. Please continue to watch after your fellow Brothers and Sisters and take the time to encourage and support our new hires to ensure their success for a long, safe career. Although the committee expressed concern of staffing levels, the company has no immediate plans for another go around with hiring.

Health & Safety- A handful of our elected folks participated in the USW Health and Safety training in Pittsburg in September. Lots of good information sharing was had. We continue to urge people to utilize the Safety processes we have in place. Formally submit your safety concerns so they are documented and tracked. If you feel your concerns are not being heard, formally contact the Joint Health and Safety committee.

DOSH is continuing their investigation on the CRU#1 Heater Fire. Interviews have been completed. Multiple information requests have been submitted and they are currently reviewing MOC's relating to that unit. All in All I believe it is a good thing they were brought in and feel some good positive steps in Health and Safety will be made as a result of their investigation.

Local and Unit elections- Nominations are under way for both Local and Unit Officers and Committees. I strongly encourage you all to get involved and show support of our Union. If you are interested in running or would like more information, the nominating committee consists of Brothers Lito Cantu, Greg Digiovanna, Geno Stemme, and Joe Solomon. Nominations will close at end of November's monthly Union meeting and ballots will be sent to your homes shortly after that.

Medical Premiums- Great news from your Medical Committee. After watching our hired consultants Robert Knepler and Chris Taylor call Regence on their inflated renewal proposal, we all agreed to a rate freeze for 2011. This means there will be no reduction/change in plan coverage and also no rate increase from Regence. This rate freeze accompanied with the rate increase of the company's HSM plan equates to a \$97.41 per month decrease in the employee + family premium and a \$35.82 decrease for the employee only plan.

Grievances & Arbitrations- We recently received the Arbitrators ruling regarding Ramiro Fuentes' unjust termination grievance. It was a favorable ruling with reinstatement of his previous position with full back pay and benefits. This was a huge win for all of us. We are working on dates for Ramiro to return, when you see him, please welcome him back.

Erwin Rommel's arbitration will be taking place November 11th, we feel we have a strong case, but will wait and see.

Still waiting to hear ruling on Ed Heddington's arbitration.

A panel has been struck for an arbitrator for the Relief Console Operator selection grievances, now we are trying to nail down a date to proceed.

Attendance recognition- During the 2009 contract negotiations, the company wanted to implement an attendance recognition program against the committee's recommendations. An LOA was signed and although the program never really was fully implemented, you did achieve the attendance goal for the 4th quarter of 2009. The committee asked the company to honor the LOA and they agreed. A \$50 gas card will be distributed by the Shop Stewards to all employees that were employed during that time once the Company receives the cards from Corporate.

Monthly Union meetings occur the third Thursday of every month. Our Unit meeting starts at 4:30pm with the Local meeting following at 6:00pm. Thanks to all that show up and hopefully will see you all at next month's meeting.

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season,

In Solidarity,

Scott Johnston