Members Keep Presses Rolling in Spokane

The Spokesman-Review is the most comprehensive news source for Spokane and the surrounding areas in Eastern Washington, but there is far more to keeping a newspaper printing daily than simply writing stories. Beyond just the daily newspaper, there are many other jobs run on these presses, including other publications, ads, brochures, etc. – which demand the equipment remain in top running condition.

Three IAM members are charged with maintaining the presses, imaging equipment, prepress equipment, packaging machines – basically any equipment with moving parts. This is no easy task.

“In 125 years, the Spokesman-Review has never missed getting an edition of this family-owned newspaper printed. As one of the people charged with maintaining the equipment, I want to make sure we don’t miss a paper on my watch. Who would want to disrupt that streak?” stated IAM member Jeff Jones, who is also President of Local 86. “Like most papers, times are tough at the Spokesman-Review. We were a five-man shop and had to scale back to three people who now cover 20 hours a day/7 days a week very creatively. We work together and just find a way to get it done.”

Beyond just the 125-year newspaper record, this talented group of individuals have another impressive record they are proud of – maintaining 100 percent Union members in an open shop. “I always have people complain about paying dues. Because we have an open shop, we don’t have to pay dues, but I’m...

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Members at Allied Waste Services Ratify New Contract by 100%

District 751 members who work for Allied Waste Services in Goldendale are looking forward to 3-percent annual raises over the next three years, thanks to a new Union contract they ratified unanimously earlier this fall.

Everybody seems to be pretty happy,” said Steward Garry Shane, who was part of the negotiating team. “Two percent is doing pretty well, in this economy, and we got 3 percent.”

Shane is one of 15 Local 1951 members who work for Allied Waste, which is a subsidiary of Rabanco Ltd., one of the nation’s largest solid-waste disposal companies. All 15 voted to accept the company’s contract offer in September, which came after about two weeks of negotiations.

The Allied Waste bargaining unit performs basic disposal services – trash collection and recycling, plus running three transfer sites – for communities in Klickitat County. They then haul the trash to the big regional landfill in Roosevelt, Wash. Workers there are also represented by the IAM, but are in a different bargaining unit.

This was the third contract for the Allied Waste group since they joined the IAM in 2002.

Before organizing, “we felt like we weren’t being treated right,” Shane said. “The bargaining unit out there at Rooses...

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very proud we have always had 100% participation. We all choose to pay dues,” Jones added. “In addition, we have always had someone on the Local Lodge Executive Board—demonstrating our commitment to the Union.”

The strong Union presence unfortunately does not carry throughout the paper. There are two other unions at the Spokane-Review—CWA and Teamsters—yet on a good month, they only have about 40 percent union participation/membership.

Negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement will begin in January with Union Steward Terry Frei serving on the bargaining committee. Members there realize it will be tough negotiations and have watched all the other employees at the paper take paycuts. Their IAM contract is the only thing that stopped management from implementing similar cutbacks on them.

“In the last contract, we added the Western Metal Trades Pension in lieu of a raise,” Union Steward Terry Frei recalled. “While we have a company pension, we decided it was in our best interest to get something else so now we have both. I believe it also helped the Company with taxes—making it a win-win.”

“We have always had a good relationship with the company—mainly because we have always stepped up and found ways to save the company money,” Frei added. “We make many parts from scratch or find a way to repair them—all of which saves money. Every part on the presses is super expensive. To repair them would take more active roles in their Councils to improve validity of their arguments, Shane said. “To their credit, management saw the raises. To their credit, management saw the

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Washington State Labor Council Conventions, six years on the Washington Machinists Council, and helping with other union activities throughout the region.

“My Union leadership responsibilities have given me an opportunity to represent our members from the shop floor to the bargaining table,” stated Steve. “I look forward to working with the members in a new capacity and to service our members in Eastern Washington.”

This fall, the IAM offered a new class to Local Lodge Officers who are associated with the Metal & Atomic Trades Council at the Winpisinger Technology Center at Placid Harbor, Maryland. The new class was specially developed to provide the skills needed to take more active roles in their council. Local Lodge 1951 Recording Secretary Chris Siegfried took part in the class to better represent our members at the Hanford Nuclear Site.

Chris was impressed with the leadership training, which included 12 different sessions covering topics such as Power Analysis, Team Dynamics, Communications, Met

al Trades Constitution and Bylaws, Strategic Planning, Internal Organizing, Coalition Building, Psychology, Decision Making, IAM and MTD History, Steward Training and Jurisdiction Disputes and Resolutions. This is the start of building an ongoing leadership corps at Metal & Atomic Trades Councils,” said Henry Bagwell, who coordinated the course with the Collective Bargaining, Federal Employees and other Departments at IAM Headquarters.

Worksites covered by Metal & Atomic Trades Councils have unique issues because many of the work groups are represented by different international unions and must bargain together with employers. IAM Officers and Business Representatives from government sites, refineries, chemical manufacturers and shipyards worked together at the Winpisinger Center to develop strategic plans to use in their locations. The course gives Locals a good foundation to become more pro-active in the Councils to improve IAM members’ representation. Ron Auit, President of the Metal Trades Council, was one of the many speakers at the class.

Chris said he appreciated the training, was impressed with the information presented and eager to use it to the benefit of his members in the Tri-Cities.

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This time, that advantage translated into raises of 50 to 60 cents an hour for each employ

ee in each of the next three years. Depending on job classifications, that means raises range between 2.7 and 3.7 percent each year.

In addition, the Company agreed to:

• Increase its safety boot allowance from $100 to $150 per employee;

• Reimburse employees classified as swappers up to $75 each for their out-of-pocket costs for physicals mandated by the Department of Transportation;

• Increase its pension contribution.

“Pretty much everything we set out to get we got,” Shane said. “We tackled the key issues that are important to the members,” said Business Rep Steve Warren, who was part of the negotiating team. In particular, he said, the members said they wanted to increase the boot allowance. They also wanted to ensure that swappers—the assistants who help the drivers—got better pay.

This contract did that, he said. “This is a really great group of guys,” Warren said. “They pull together to get things done. If it snows, they still get their garbage picked up. And they do it with an excellent safety record—one of the best in the industry.”

“That was one of the big things management recognized,” he concluded.

Shane said the other members of the negotiating team—Warren, District 751 Administrative Assistant Jim Bearden and Member Mike Solomon—did a good job of laying out the case for the raises. To their credit, management saw the validity of their arguments, Shane said. “We tried to present our case and I think we did a pretty good job,” he said. “We have an excellent record as far as safety and attendance, and few problems.”

In all, “we did better than we thought we were going to do,” Shane said. “Everybody was really happy with our representation. I think the unanimous vote indicates that.”

Union Steward Terry Frei will serve on the bargaining committee for upcoming negotiations.

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1951 Takes New Class for Metal Trades Locals

Local 1951 Recording Secretary Chris Siegfried took advantage of a new class for Locals in Metal Trades Council the IAM recently offered.