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21 NEWS

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21 News is a periodic publication of USW (United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union) Local 2-21, 1201 Sheridan Road, Escanaba, Michigan 49829. The views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily that of the International Union, the Local 2-21 membership, or the officers of these bodies. The editor reserves the right to refuse any article that is detrimental to the Local Union or the USW. Article accuracy and content is the responsibility of the author.

Important Information & Events

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

www.freckmanandassociates.com (800) 331-3226

Retiree Get Together First Wednesday of month 10am at the Union Hall

Union Meeting: Second Wednesday - 7 pm – Dinner 6 pm

Strike for Hunger: June 3rd-5th Elmer's & Super One

Steward's Meeting: Fourth Wednesday - 3 pm at the Hall

Welfare Club Meeting: First Monday of the month - 7 pm at the Mead Rod & Gun Club

Total Benefit Solutions: Union Hall hours on the first two Wednesdays of each month. Call 1.877.265.2212 to schedule an appointment.



Committee Members

President	Steve Benoit	233-2529	399-4195
1st Vice	Chuck Way	233-2705	280-1698
2nd Vice	Bob Larson		420-2256
3rd Vice	Jeff Skorupski	233-2556	399-5472
Insurance	Gerald Kell	233-3135	869-7943
Comp	Ross Strand	233-2549	280-1494
Secretary	Brandon Stromberg	233-2714	284-1604
Treasurer	Guy Trudell	233-2534	399-9143
Hall Rental	Steve Kennedy		789-1933



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Strike for Hunger
June 3rd – 5th
Elmer's County Market
&
Super One Foods

Default “Managed Advice” Enrollment

Gerald Kell, Insurance Advocate

Over the next few weeks, our 401(k) plan service provider will be transitioning from Empower to Transamerica. By now you should've received several communications about the vast details involving this move. While there will be informational meetings offered by Transamerica in June (see page 3 of newsletter for schedule), there are some key points we'd like to address.

It's safe to say that many of us default to a status quo participation level in regards to insurance or retirement—especially the younger members. Unfortunately, this very common approach can prove consequential, e.g. a member who simply did nothing last year for open enrollment in the healthcare plan was automatically enrolled and is now paying premiums because they were under the impression that inaction meant no coverage, whereas the default was, in fact, single coverage. In the communications from Transamerica, you'll find they plan to automatically enroll each member into what's called a “Managed Advice” service. If you're active with your 401(k), you may be familiar with such service as they are typically offered through a selected option that comes at a cost to your portfolio. The difference here is that inaction will result in default enrollment which comes at a cost—after the 60 day free trial. Please note that the managed advice service is different from a Target Fund in which you select a retirement age and income goal. Those are typically included at no additional cost. While I'm not suggesting how members should manage their retirement, negligence on this “Managed Advice” option could prove costly to an unsuspecting participant. Between June 8th and June 22nd you'll have early access to your Transamerica account. Please take the time to research your investment options and select what's best for you goals. We will be looking to change this default setting.

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Iron Mountain Escanaba Marquette Menominee Houghton

Summer Fundraiser with 108th District House Candidate Dana Dziedzic

Join us at the USW Hall on June 15th from 4:30-7:30 for a meet-and-greet with Dana Dziedzic. Dana is running for the Michigan House of Representatives for the 108th District—Delta, Menominee, and Dickinson Counties. There will be face painting, bean bags, temporary tattoos, root beer floats, and water balloon toss for kids! She will also be addressing the membership before the union meeting on June 8th.

“As I am making my way through the primary election cycle, over and over again, I am meeting individuals who are concerned about the economy, local infrastructure and protecting workers' rights.

Since I started my teaching career, I have been a member of the Michigan Education Association. As a union member and a teacher of history, I educate young people on the role unions played and continue to play in the American economy. Our brothers and sisters fought for a 40-hour workweek, overtime/vacation pay, fringe benefits, a safe and healthy work environment and the enforcement of child labor laws. Clearly, unions created the middle-class in Michigan and throughout America.

The work of unions continues to benefit all workers. Often times, what unions fight for become labor laws. Therefore, lest we forget, union members have sacrificed their life for the cause of the working man and woman.”



Community Pride, Community Wide

Gerald Kell, Rapid Response

Our Local's commitment to the community has been a basic tenant of our foundation for a very long time. We continue that effort by seeking opportunities to mobilize our membership with initiatives that share that commitment. This year's Community Pride, Community Wide Clean-Up was another chance for us to do so. Not only was it our first year as a primary sponsor, but we also tackled a large section of the clean-up area on Saturday, May 21st. A special thanks to Art Caron, Jake Mills & family, Gary DuBord Jr. & family, Ryan Weber & family, Mr. & Mrs. Guy Trudell, Jim King & family, and 108th District candidate, Dana Dziedzic, for helping us clean up downtown.



The money raised this evening will go towards signage and canvassing flyers. Thank you for your support!

Event Paid for by: “Elect Dana Dziedzic”

P.O. Box 35, Carney, MI 49812

Lori Moreau, Treasurer

<http://www.danadziedzic.com>

TRANSAMERICA 401(k)

Beginning July 1, 2016 all 401(k) plan accounts and records will transition from Empower to Transamerica. Employees do not need to re-enroll or complete any paperwork as part of this transition. However, the investment funds available in the plan will change. There will be a black-out period from June 23rd to the week ending July 22nd during which employees will not be able to access their accounts. Employees should review their accounts and make any desired changes before the blackout period begins. Upon the transfer of assets on July 1st employee accounts will be invested in stable, cash-equivalent investments until records are received from Empower. Account interest/gains (and losses) will accrue during the transition period.

On June 17th a representative from Transamerica will conduct information sessions in the Training Center adjacent to the lunchroom. **These are voluntary unpaid meetings for hourly employees** per the following schedule and designed for the groups noted:

- 12:30 p.m. - A Crew (8 hr schedule), C&D Crew (12 hr schedule) on off-days, D Crew (8 hr schedule)
- 2:00 p.m. - C Crew (8 hr schedule), Switch Crew and Water Monitor on 3 p.m. shift, day Janitors, Clothing Person, Pulp Lab, Safety Advisors, Hourly Trainers
- 3:00 p.m. - Day Maintenance, Yard, Switch Crew, Water Monitor, Storeroom, Pulp Lab, Safety Advisors, Hourly Trainers and Teamsters.
- 4:30 p.m. - B Crew (12 hr schedule), Spotter, Material Handler (5am-4pm shift)
- 6:00 p.m. - A Crew (12 hr schedule), Spotter, Janitor
- 8:30 p.m. - B Crew (8 hr schedule), Maintenance Tour, Turbine employees



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Jamie Sebeck
Owner/Operator

USW Local 21 Strike for Hunger

Brandon Stromberg, Secretary/Rapid Response

The "Strike for Hunger" is one of those community events that really brings people together and promotes solidarity. When we decided to expand the event this year we called Super One Foods to see if they would be interested in working with us. The response was immediate and a resounding, "YES!" Then we considered adding drop off locations throughout the county, and again we received overwhelmingly positive responses from Kuchenberg's Market, White's Grocery, and the North Bluff Grocery. Our promotional effort downtown Escanaba further demonstrated the community's eagerness to help. We would walk into a local business, introduce ourselves, and explain why we were there. Mid-conversation, the person would interrupt us and say, "I know what that is and we would love to help!" When asked, Radio Results Network pitched in by granting us an interview and running on-air spots valued at nearly \$3,500. Local X Games legend and U.S. Olympic Snowboarder, Nick Baumgartner, is using his star power to draw his numerous fans by attending the event Friday afternoon! Strike for Hunger has created a buzz in our community; the anticipation is building, everyone is excited to help and thankful for what we're doing. We will continue to ensure fewer and fewer members of our community will go hungry. THANK YOU to each and every one of those who donate, volunteers, and helps in any way for this wonderful event.

On a positive note...

Bob Larson, 2nd Vice President

The Company would prefer we portray them in a more positive manner in our newsletter. That makes for a very short article. The Company pays us well and gives us a lot of hours, but the wages are bargained by our union, not just given by the Company. I do believe the leadership team is trying as hard as they can to make our plant a success and the plans they have, if implemented, will make our plant viable for many more years to come. The decline of paper can't be blamed on them, but they gladly take credit for any success and tend to blame us for failures. If the trends continue this team could be gone in a year and we will learn a bunch of new names and acronyms. The more things change, the more they stay the same! The only constant is us and as long as we stick together, we will prevail.

UNITED STEELWORKERS PAC POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Do you know that USW District 2 has a 94% active membership density? We are stronger in numbers. Let us proudly keep that number high, encourage membership retention and pursue expansion. You can help this effort by contributing the USW PAC fund. USW PAC makes it possible for our union to run the most effective, member-driven program in the labor movement; and, it is funded entirely by voluntary contributions from members like you. Federal law prohibits your dues dollars from being used for most political purposes, which is why our union has established the United Steelworkers Political Action Committee (USW PAC). Please take the opportunity to support those who support you! Included in this newsletter is a page that explains more and tells you how to help!

Updates

Steve Benoit, President

Master Agreement talks will begin in the near future and the Union Committee is gearing up for them. If you were at the last Union meeting you got an opportunity to see the results of the contract survey taken a few months ago. This survey is an asset to the Committee as we now study it to be sure we are addressing what's important to our membership. We are also employing the assistance of professionals to guide us in preparation for the Master Agreement. Remember, the Master Agreement is the white contract book that covers our wages, retirement, healthcare, etc. Please take some time to look through this contract book and provide additional feedback to the Union Committee.

The Mill will go smoke-free on June 1st with a probationary period of one month. We would like you to know that the Union Committee worked very hard to successfully bargain several changes to the Company's original plan to go smoke-free. Firstly,

a non-disciplinary transition period to help our Union Brothers and Sisters who currently smoke; also, we were able to get Nicorette gum provided in Health Services. From the bargaining, members will be allowed to smoke in their personal vehicles when arriving or leaving work in the parking lot—something the Company was not going to allow. These accommodations may seem minor, but the truth is at other mills you cannot smoke anywhere, they had no transition periods, and smoking cessation products may not be provided on-site. Please remember that June is a transition time for you to prepare for July 1st when discipline will be administered. If you are caught smoking in June you will be coached. I encourage you to utilize this transition time to adjust. If you need assistance beyond what our insurance or Health Services is providing, please contact me or any of the Committee members.



The Kraft Mill Digester MIOSHA complaint is coming to an end and we should have a closing meeting in the next week. I want to thank everyone that has been involved for continually speaking up for safety. Our Kraft Mill members diligently conveyed the danger they were dealing with and our Union Safety Reps continually reaffirmed this in meetings. Measures are now being taken by both management and union to keep people safe in this area. Watch for more information on the MIOSHA closing meeting. Remember *Stand Up, Speak Out for Safety!!*

Also on the safety front, we are very concerned with the hiring of a new company to take care of the Number 10 Boiler on the down coming up June 6th. RMR Mechanical, Inc. is a company out of Georgia that will be here to perform work on the Number 10 Boiler. Our concerns derive from hearing their work at other mills has not been done to standard or has been left unfinished. This information is hard to 100% to verify but it sure does lead us to significant level of concern. Another item of concern is cost. We were told that bringing in RMR is costing more than hiring the same group that has successfully worked on the boiler for years. We have submitted an information request to verify this information, but thus far we've been denied based on confidentiality and a purported lack of legal

obligation to do so. We'll continue to work at obtaining this information through different avenues, such as USW lawyers because we do feel that they do need to answer when it comes to our safety. On a positive note, while RMR is here, the Company is providing a safety oasis for the first time. A safety oasis is a designated location where different beverages, food, safety information and health services can be provided. My hope is the safety oasis is provided in the future for *all* downs because it is a great idea to ensure additional safety measures for *all* employees.

Please continue to show our strength! I expect a great turnout at our Union Meeting on June 8th!



12 Hour Vacancy Procedure/Bankers

Jeff Skorupski, 3rd Vice President

There have been a few issues surrounding the 12 hour vacancy procedure lately. The biggest issue is when and how often an employee can be forced to work an 18 hour shift. We recently sat down with the Human Resources Department to clarify the language. We have submitted a proposal that the membership will be voting on in the near future. The current language on the vacancy procedure currently reads:

"An employee can work only one 18 hour shift during consecutive 12 hour day rotations"(i.e., an employee could work 12 hours Sunday, Monday, 18 hours Tuesday and 12 hours Wednesday).

The new wording will read:

"Any hours worked over a 16 hour shift, either voluntarily or forced, would constitute an 18 hour day and would require a day off before working over another 16 hour shift. An exception would be in the case of an annual time change or to attend a safety meeting before or after shift."

Additionally, an issue has arisen with employees volunteering to work 18 hours for Extra Help. The

only reason a person should be working 18 hours is to cover a *vacancy*, HR should've now communicated this to supervision. This includes staying over or coming in early or voluntarily working a shutdown. We are going to clarify the wording on the Extra Help procedure and also vote on this at the Hall.

We've recently had a few instances of employees cancelling their bankers at the last minute. The problem with a last minute cancellation is that a coworker has already changed their plans and agreed to cover that banker on their off day. We have met with the Company to come up with some language that will be voted on by the membership. The proposed wording is

"The company and the employee have two business days prior to the date of a banker or personal day to cancel the scheduled banker. A business day in this situation is defined as any day excluding weekends and holidays observed by the collective bargaining agreement (i.e. if you scheduled a banker for a Thursday it must be cancelled by 5 pm on Monday)"

Enrollment for New Hires

Gerald Kell, Insurance Advocate

If you are a new hire or know a new hire in your area that is approaching their eligibility date for getting their insurance coverage, please contact me to share your experience and confirm everything is in place. I am unable to personally verify coverage due to privacy laws and am finding out that many of our recent hires do not have coverage even though they thought they had successfully enrolled in our plan. A simple way to verify your benefits is to call Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee through the Verso One number – 1.800.422.6103. For those of you who haven't heard, Verso's method for enrolling new employees into our healthcare plan is to provide them with the necessary materials on the day they become eligible as opposed to an earlier date which would allow them to review benefits and enroll in a timely manner. I have yet to hear a logical or sound defense of this practice, honestly it is perplexing. Similar to how we look out for one another with safety, let's work together to show the new employees that our solidarity applies to all facets—help them get in touch with the proper personnel when they have trouble with anything from insurance to grievances.

Ignorance is not bliss

Brandon Stromberg, Secretary/Rapid Response

For most of my life I was not involved in politics, but I have learned how to work over that time. My dad, Randy, worked in the mines before I was even born. He was making over \$11/hour in the 1970s and was able to pay off the house I was born in before he even was married my mom, Catherine. Then he worked in the local foundry for Coleman Products and then John Crane Group. Meanwhile, Aaron, myself, and Seth were born. My dad put his head down, remained neutral, worked hard, and believed he would always have a job. He never let anything prevent him from providing for his family—he even sold night crawlers for extra cash. The sad reality is, even though my dad worked extremely hard, his job always seemed to get shuttered or go to Mexico. My dad believed all a person had to do was put their head down, remain neutral, and work hard, but those beliefs did not give him what he needed for himself or his family. I love my dad very much and I tried to follow his same mantra for the majority of my life: *put your head down, remain neutral, and work hard*. I was 24 when I got hired at the mill. I wasn't politically active, involved in the union, or even registered to vote! But I was ready to work hard.



Soon I realized my success didn't necessarily depend on how hard I worked as there were so many factors that contributed to our success or failure—decrease in coated paper demand, technology, currency manipulation, imports, legislation, etc. “What *can* I do beyond just working hard?” I thought. I got involved in safety, the union, and then into politics. Politics is never an easy topic. It can turn friends into enemies and divide family, but it absolutely impacts nearly every facet of our lives. It can affect how we work, live, and play. This election season is no different, I challenge each of you to ask questions and seek truthful answers. Trump, Clinton, or Sanders may not be your ideal candidate, but ask questions and educate yourself about which one has your best interests in mind. Do it for yourself, your family, and your fellow citizens. Our future depends on it!




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Solidarity Party in lieu of Picnic

Jeff Skorupski, 3rd Vice President

With the Company's recent decision to no longer have the picnic, the Union will host a Solidarity Party for our members at the Hall on July 21st from noon to 8. We will have a bounce house for the kids to burn up some energy, we'll be grilling hotdogs, and refreshments and ice cream will be available. We would also like to have a bean bag tournament, so if you're up for the challenge, enter a team. The Local will purchase a gas grill to give away to one lucky member at the end of the day. Please make every effort to attend this get-together. If anyone wants to volunteer, please give me a call at 906.399.5472. All members and their families are encouraged to attend including retirees. There will be more details in next month's newsletter.

“Donald Trump said in Detroit during the Michigan primary election that he would close Ford plants in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Kansas, and then tell workers if they want their jobs back to come back for less money,” said UAW President Williams. That's not a presidential candidate that is good for American workers.



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Report Injuries

Ross Strand, Comp Advocate

I'm currently working with the Company on some workman's compensation issues, if you or any other member you know has been denied benefits recently please get a hold of me. As always, please turn in any and all incidents, injuries or accidents on the day they occur to avoid any discipline; unfortunately we're not Mead, MeadWestvaco, or Newpage anymore. I know in the past, if people got hurt on shift they sometimes would wait a day or two to see if the pain subsided, again, those days are gone, so make sure you turn in everything on time. I hope everyone had a great holiday weekend.

"Dark Store" Update

Gerald Kell, Rapid Response

If you've been following the "Dark Store" controversy, you may already know that a Michigan Appeals Court recently ruled that the Tax Tribunal incorrectly awarded Menards, Inc. a significantly lower tax assessment which has already cost the city of Escanaba tens of thousands of dollars. The ruling is significant in it could be the first step in closing the loophole that many big businesses have unfairly exploited to shed millions of dollars in tax liability.

The rulings have been especially detrimental to the UP because of our rural setting and small tax revenue stream. These businesses need to pay their fair share of taxes just like you and I so we can retain basic services such as police, fire, schools, and roadwork. Unfortunately, the ruling does not appear to be retroactive, but does clarify the laws

and methods the tribunal should be applying when making further rulings and has sent the Menards vs. Escanaba case back to them.

At the forefront of the ruling was the employment of deed restrictions which these large businesses were self-imposing to drop their fair market price to get



a lower assessment. It'd be like you or I specifying that our house could not be sold to anyone unless they drove a bright green car with pink racing stripes; it arbitrarily restricts the ability to sell the property, therefore reducing the taxable value.

There is currently a bill in state Congress—HB 5578—to close the loophole, you can keep up on its progress online at <http://www.legislature.mi.gov> and contact the co-sponsors of the bill, John Kivela (D) of Marquette and Scott Dianda (D) from the 110th District.

Honoring Military Members

Steve Benoit, President

We now have a bulletin board at the Hall dedicated to members who have served or are serving in our military. We as a union believe that the dedication of one's life to protect others is an incomparable sacrifice and should be honored. If you or any of your union brothers/sisters are serving or have served—active or retired members—please provide Steve Benoit with a picture and information. We thank you for your service to our nation and its citizens and look forward to honoring you at the Union Hall. Information can be sent to beno7021@yahoo.com or by contacting Steve Benoit directly at 906.399.4195.



Family Medical Leave Act Info

Gerald Kell, Insurance Advocate

There have been a lot of questions surrounding FMLA as of late and I wanted to address the basics for everyone so you get an idea of what it is. As for the history behind it, the Family Medical Leave Act was passed back in 1993 as a primary initiative by President Bill Clinton to balance the needs of the workplace and the needs of families.

FMLA

Employers in every state, including Michigan, are subject to the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which allows eligible employees to take unpaid leave, with the right to reinstatement, for certain reasons. In addition, many states have their own laws that require employers to provide time off for family and medical reasons. Michigan is not one of them, however. In Michigan, employees have only the rights guaranteed by the FMLA.

Who Is Covered?

Michigan employers must comply with the FMLA if they have at least 50 employees for at least 20 weeks in the current or previous year.

Employees may take FMLA leave if:

- they have worked for the company for at least a year
- they worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous year, and
- they work at a location with at least 50 employees within a 75-mile radius.

Reasons for Leave

FMLA leave is available if an employee needs time off to:

- recuperate from a serious health condition
- care for a family member with a serious health condition

- bond with a new child
- handle qualifying exigencies arising out of a family member's military service, or
- care for a family member who suffered a serious injury during active duty in the military

How Much Leave Is Available?

Employees may take up to 12 weeks of leave in a 12-month period for a serious health condition, bonding with a new child, or qualifying exigencies. This leave renews every 12 months, as long as the employee continues to meet the eligibility requirements set out above.

Employees may take up to 26 weeks of leave in a single 12-month period to care for a family member who was injured on active military duty. However, this leave is a per-injury, per-service member entitlement. Unless the same family member is injured again, or another family member suffers an injury while on active duty, an employee may not take an additional leave for this purpose.

Leave and Reinstatement Rights

Employees are entitled to continue their health insurance while on leave, at the same cost they must pay while working. Although FMLA leave is unpaid, employees may be allowed (or required) to use their accrued paid leave during FMLA leave.

When an employee's FMLA leave ends, the employee is entitled to be reinstated to the same or an equivalent position, with a few exceptions.

Reflective Vest Policy in PS&D

Ryan Weber, Safety Adviser

A little over a year ago, a decision was made to require high visibility reflective vests for employees working or walking in PS&D that aren't doing so in designated walkways. This policy was driven by the amount of foot traffic in and around the PS&D department which created a safety issue between truck operators and pedestrians. By requiring employees who are traveling off of designated walkways to wear high visibility vest, pedestrians now stick out and are more visible to truck operators, decreasing the hazard. The intentions of the policy change were all well in

nature and have been helpful in protecting employees from potentially being struck by a clamp or fork truck. However, there are two issues with this current policy. One is that while not required on walkways, there are times when someone intends to stay on a walkway but travel off of them for one reason or another. Another is that walkways aren't currently marked clearly which creates confusion for employees who want to follow the policy but aren't sure if they are required to wear a vest or not. With that said, there are some changes coming to the current policy which could help negate these issues. The biggest change would be requiring any employee who enters the PS&D department to wear a reflective vest regardless of path of travel. This change would mean that as long as you are in PS&D, you will be required to wear a vest. There will be no more designated walkway language in the policy; it would instead encompass the entire department/area. Whether you are coming over from another department for a meeting, to core cut, or any other task in the PS&D department, a vest will be required. There are exceptions to this policy which are outlined below:

During Shift Changes

- Traveling to and from your area at shift change

Truck Shop Garage

- Working inside the Truck Shop Garage

Reprocessing Winder

- While operating the winder equipment

Office areas and Break rooms

- While performing work in office areas
- While in break rooms

The biggest change I foresee would be for the office personnel who travel to meetings or leave the office for work. Any time they are on the floor, they will be required to wear a vest, even if they are leaving the office area and heading elsewhere into the mill. Also included in this policy would be the reprocessing wrapper personnel. Although **NOT** required to wear them while operating equipment, they will be required when checking rolls out on the floor or prepping rolls to run in their machines. These changes are meant to protect the employee and are being made in good faith. Once this policy is finalized, it will be properly communicated to the mill so everyone understands the expectations for the PS&D department/area. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

UP Labor Management Council

USW Local 21 President, Steve Benoit, along with USW member, Joe Curran, recently presented a sponsorship check in the amount of \$15,441.48 to the Upper Peninsula Labor Management Council. This is a unique sponsorship from USW Local 21 membership which began in 2013. Labor Co-Chair, Todd Flath of AFSCME 25 and Management Co-Chair Paula Swartout of DCHS accepted the annual sponsorship check on behalf of the Upper Peninsula Labor-Management Council.



The Council has been educating and promoting Labor/Management cooperation for 45 years. It aims to encourage cooperation in the public and private sector, recognition of the rights of each, and promotion of the public's understanding of their relationship. The UPLMC also works with entities who share this common goal. All proceeds received help underwrite youth *and* adult programs.

The 4-Unity Sponsorship program and the High School Collective Bargaining Workshop have been valuable educational workshops. Students that attend the workshop are also eligible to apply for the \$500 Gerry Kendziorski Scholarship. For more information call the Upper Peninsula Labor Management Council at 906.466.0155.

