



# UNION SPIRIT

Vol. 19, Issue 1  
January / February 2008

Mitsubishi Unit Premier Unit Interlake Unit

## Illinois Presidential Primary Election

By: Tim Denaro

The Illinois legislature voted last year to change the Illinois Presidential Primary Elections to February 5, 2008.

There will be 24 states voting in Primaries or in Caucuses on February 5, 2008. They include Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho (*Democrat only*), **Illinois**, Kansas (*Democrat only*), Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana (*Republican only*), New Jersey, New Mexico (*Democrat only*), New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Utah, and West Virginia (*Republican only*).

As you can see the winner of the lion's share of states and delegates will inevitably be crowned the respective parties candidate for President of the United States. Although, Florida in 2000 leaves news organizations leery of predicting any winner until, as they say, the final tally is calculated.

This date is important to everybody, but especially to the labor organizations and companies they represent. Organized labor has seen its membership rolls drop dramatically. In 2006, 12.0 percent of employed wage and salary workers were union members, down from 12.5 percent a year earlier, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. The number of persons belonging to a union fell by 326,000 in 2006 to 15.4 million. The union membership

rate has steadily declined from 20.1 percent in 1983, the first year for which comparable union data are available.

While the steady decline may be linked to many factors, there is no denying the fact that the atmosphere in Washington D.C. is, to say the least, hostile towards Unionizing and union members.

February 5, 2008



### I WANT YOU TO VOTE

Companies are shipping jobs overseas at dizzying rates and if they stay in the U.S. they will use the courts to break contracts and jettison pension liabilities by declaring bankruptcy. Declaring bankruptcy does not mean they have to close and go under. The right leaning judicial system allows

them to merely reorganize, slang for throw overboard, the workers and continue business as usual. Additionally, the executives who drove the company in the ground are rewarded with large bonuses by the courts.

If we are to turn this tide around and begin rebuilding we first need to begin electing candidates for all elected offices who will enact legislation that levels the playing field. But, we cannot stop there. We must stay ever vigilant while these elected officials are supposed to act on our behalf and when they do not, we don't sit and complain. We rise up and hold them accountable. We voice our dismay not only by voting, but also by phoning and writing letters to these legislators letting them know loud and clear we will not relent in our desire to be equal and treated fairly in every way.

So, does your vote count? Consider in 1960 John F. Kennedy won the total U.S. population vote by a mere 118,000 votes or a 50.1 to 49.9 margin. In 1980 Ronald Reagan beat Jimmy Carter in Massachusetts by only 6000 votes, one neighborhood not voting would have changed that outcome. Of course we all know what happened in Florida in the 2000 election. Bush won by 537 votes out of about 6 million counted.

***Don't stand by and let your future be decided by a select few. Vote and be heard. Make a difference.***

# Chairperson's Report



**By Fred Morissette**

## Bargaining Surveys

On Wednesday, January 16, 2008 the Bargaining Committee distributed contract surveys to all of the coordinators in the plant. As the coordinators hand out the contract surveys, please take the time to fully complete them. The entire committee will review each and every survey. Your opinion is very important, and as we finalize the list for our contract proposal, we want and value your suggestions.

## Detroit Meeting

On Monday, January 14, 2008, President Ralph Timan and I attended a "state of the business" meeting in Detroit, Michigan. In attendance were the International Union and Mitsubishi management from the US and Japan. This meeting was part of a regularly scheduled set of meetings established in the 2006 negotiations to make sure the union was kept fully informed of the financial recovery of Mitsubishi Motors.

At this meeting we were given the specifics of capacity and utilization of each Mitsubishi plant. Mitsubishi management explained that they had not yet reached their financial objectives at the Normal facility during the 2007 fiscal year. Projections indicated that it would not be possible for Mitsubishi to reach their goal of a zero dollar loss, by the end of the fiscal year, March 31, 2008.

At the completion of the meeting a request was made by management to the UAW to consider changing the restoration of wages and benefits scheduled for April 7, 2008 to a lump sum payment of equivalent wages, which would be made prior to the restoration date. Mitsubishi is currently deciding where future product is to be placed, and

felt the investors would look upon our facility more favorably with the proposed change. The undocumented proposal calls for associates to be given a lump sum payment equivalent to the wage restorations to be earned from April 7 through August 28, 2008.

On Wednesday, January 16, I presented this information and the lump sum payment proposal to the rest of the Bargaining Committee. After discussing the issue, the Bargaining Committee felt that the verbal proposal, without any written details or guarantees, and without the consent of the membership to open the contract, could not be discussed further. We, as well as President Timan, were unanimous in the decision that, at this point in time, the lump sum payment would not be beneficial to our members. A letter stating this fact was distributed to the membership on January 22nd.

The proposed lump sum payment would weaken our position at the bargaining table this summer and would not take into consideration many variables including overtime, etc.

Mitsubishi management expectations and goals varied greatly, and while they may not have attained their financial goal, their expected losses were substantially less than originally projected. The solitary means to making this facility profitable is not by cutting or manipulating the associates wages and benefits. Key ingredients to a profitable facility include a desirable, well-made product, great advertising and sales incentives, and operating the plant at its full operating capacity.

Manpower	
<b>Production</b>	<b>1186 (-2)</b>
<b>Skilled Trades</b>	<b>187 (+2)</b>
<b>Apprentices</b>	<b>4 (-1)</b>
<b>Supplemental</b>	<b>59 (-6)</b>
<b>Laid Off</b>	<b>685(-6)</b>

Domestic Sales December 2007	Units	2006
Galant	1,009	↓ 56.7%
Eclipse	968	↓ 40.4%
Spyder	203	↓ 66.6%
Endeavor	688	↓ 47.8%

**Total domestic sales 5,269.  
Decrease of 51.2% from December**

Export Sales December 2007	Country	Units
Galant	Canada	4
	Puerto Rico	60
	Kuwait	253
	Oman	4
	Bahrain	26
	Jebel Ali	262
	Jordan	19
Eclipse	Russia	190
	Ukraine	79
<b>Total</b>		<b>897</b>
Spyder	Mexico	17
	Canada	132
<b>Total</b>		<b>149</b>
Endeavor	Mexico	4
	Canada	39
<b>Total</b>		<b>43</b>
Total	Puerto Rico	47
	Canada	117
	Mexico	285
<b>Total</b>		<b>449</b>

**Total export sales 1,538.**

Total Combined Domestic & Export Sales	Unit
Galant	1906
Eclipse	1117
Spyder	246
Endeavor	1137

December Grievance Report	
<b>Work Hours</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Discipline</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>

## The President's Report



By **Ralph Timan**

### State of the Union

I'm proud to report that the state of our local union is fiscally strong. Last year at this time I asked for your input on the budget proposals that myself and the Executive Board had established. I'm pleased to report that we finished "in the black", with income exceeding expenditures for thirteen months in a row, totaling more than \$40,000 in savings for 2007. What made 2007's budget success different from the previous year? There were no contract negotiations in 2007. With your support we stayed within our budget by analyzing costs and watching operational expenses. The savings boosts our economic strength as we head into a major contract negotiations year.

We will use the same successful financial management again this year. We do anticipate needing access to savings for the purpose of contract negotiations later this year. This will likely end the 2008 financial year "in the red". Looking back on previous Mitsubishi contract negotiations years we typically have higher expenses. Typically, the cost of negotiating a contract can be expensive, based on past history and a number of factors such as costs of the facilities to meet and the length of the negotiating period. This is why, as an Executive Board, we must plan years in advance for these major contract talks. I want to thank you, our membership, for your continued support of our budgeting process and keeping our collective interests in mind for 2008.

Another area we must pay close attention to in 2008 is the Presidential election. We must be energized to get out and vote in 2008. Throughout the year we will be concentrating on providing you with the information you need to help you in making an educated and informed vote. During the year we will also be working on

voter registration to make sure as many members as possible are eligible to vote in this most important election.

Over the past eight years a lot has happened in our country, especially in the manufacturing and automotive sectors. Increased global competition has taken a toll on the domestic manufacturers and the smaller players in the global market, such as Mitsubishi, are feeling the squeeze of the global competition. Our current trade policies must be re-examined and a commitment to Fair Trade, not Free Trade should be our goal. We should also look at candidates' plans to reinvigorate the manufacturing base of our country.

Another area that must be addressed is the current state of healthcare in the United States. Unless we have fundamental change in our health care system the skyrocketing cost will make it further out of reach for millions of Americans. The increasing costs of health care cannot go unnoticed at the federal level, which is where the effective changes can be made. I know that some people are scared by such words as "socialized medicine" or "Hillary care" yet the facts remain, the United States is the only industrialized country without a national healthcare program. There are many good plans out that cover a broad array of ideas.

Our next President will need to put together a bi-partisan approach to get the proper legislation through Congress and get America moving forward on these critical issues. We can no longer afford to watch silently year after year as these major issues fail to be addressed in Washington. They both have a major impact on our workplace. It is clear in this Presidential campaign that we need a President who will be able to work with both parties to resolve the issues of the people, not the special interests. Our country has become too polarized by "wedge issues" and red states versus blue states. Labors' issues will continue to lose in these fights unless we have a candidate who will stand with us not only at election time but all the time. Please take the time to become familiar with a candidates' stand on the Employee Free Choice Act, Striker Replacement, Union Organizing and Workers Rights. There

are clear differences between the parties on these issues.

Finally, I would like to thank the membership for their tremendous support of the Toys for Tots campaigns over the holiday season. We were able to make a difference in the lives of many families in both McLean and Livingston counties with our generous donations. I would like to thank the Skilled Trades Committee, and personnel, for all their efforts at the Mitsubishi Plant and their Bargaining Committeeman Jim Tarr for leading the effort. At Interlake, I would like to thank Bargaining Chairman Eric Monical and Health and Safety Representative Rosie Torrez for coordinating our efforts in Pontiac, along with the brothers and sisters of UAW Local 2096 who joined us again this year. We also need to recognize both the Mitsubishi and Interlake companies for their generous donations to the campaigns; together we DO make a difference.

### Letter from Region 4 Director, Dennis Williams, dated January 10, 2008

I hope all of you had a Happy Holiday! Many of you have asked what the outcome was with the Region 4 membership ballot vote for President of the United States of America. As you know, in Dubuque, IA we held a vote of the delegates and Illinois Senator Barack Obama received 64% support.

On December 5, 2007 we counted approximately 8,000 ballots that were sent in by the local unions throughout Region 4. The result of that vote is Senator Barack Obama receiving the most votes. As you know, the Iowa caucus was held January 3, 2008 with Senator Barack Obama winning.

I think we will all agree that this year we have a big job ahead of us. Winning the White House is not automatic and certainly won't be easy. We need someone who will bring people together, someone who will unite Democrats, Independents and Republicans, someone who can bridge the gap between the young and our seniors. In this election, we need to restore the opportunity for the American dream.

**Get Out The Vote—Get Involved!**

## Ten-Hut Report

By Steve Pople

Your Veterans Committee would like to salute each and every one of you who donated to help Brother BJ Richardsons' son, Ryan, who was wounded when he stepped on an IED while leading a patrol. He is now home with his family recuperating. We all thank and salute you Ryan for the personal sacrifice you made for all of us. Over \$800.00 was raised to help Ryan and his family. We would also like to thank President Ralph Timan for his spearheading this fundraising effort. Best of luck to the entire Richardson family and a speedy recovery to Ryan. Support The Troops!!

One organization I learned about at the Fall conference was a group named the Wounded Warrior Project. This organization tries to make sure that every wounded soldier gets all the necessary items they need while they are recovering from their wounds. They do this in as many hospitals as they can, wherever our wounded soldiers are patients. Many times when soldiers wake up in the hospital all they have is their dog tags and a paper gown to wear. Wounded Warrior Project takes them a backpack full of dental items, underwear, socks, personal grooming, etc. All of this is done without any cost to the soldier or his family. These are very dedicated people doing a great service for our soldiers. If you would like to find out more about them you can go to [www.woundedwarriorproject.org](http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org).

The Super Bowl Party is under construction and raffle tickets are for sale. We have eight great prizes for you again this year and have still kept the cost for tickets at \$3.00. The party will be held at the Union Hall again this year and food and refreshments will be served so please think about coming this year. Remember, you must be at least 18 years old to attend. We would like to thank all of you in advance for your support of our raffle. This is our biggest fundraiser and without your support we wouldn't be able to do any of the things we do to support our Veterans in our community and surrounding communities. If you would like to help us make this year a success, helping to sell raffle tickets would be a great help. They can be picked up at the Un-

ion Hall. Additionally, here are a couple of Veterans Affairs articles we would like to share with you.

**Final VA Funding Passed:** Congress passed a historic funding bill that gives VA the largest increase in its history. The bill provides a total of \$43.1 billion in discretionary funding for VA, which is \$6.6 billion above the 2007 funding amount. The funding includes:

- \$37.2 billion for the Veterans Health Administration.
- \$3.5 billion more than last year for medical services.
- \$1.1 billion for hospital construction and \$.1 billion for medical facilities.
- funding to hire an additional 1,800 disability claims raters to help reduce the intolerable backlog of claims.

The bill now moves to the President's desk where it is expected to be signed. For the VA to receive the full amount in the bill, however, the President would have to declare \$3.7 billion of its "emergency" funding by January 18th. The VA does not receive this additional funding—which is the amount above what he had requested in his budget blueprint—until he declares the emergency. We would hope that the President quickly signs the bill into law and releases these necessary funds.

**NDAA Sent to the President's Desk:** A final defense bill authorizing \$696.4 billion dollars was sent to the President's desk this week. Chief among them is a provision that would allow Guard and Reserve members to take their GI Bill educational benefits with them when they separate from service. Currently, these brave men and women forfeit all educational benefits when they separate, despite months of combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. The defense bill also incorporates provisions from the Wounded Warrior Assistance Act and recommendations from the Veteran's Disability Benefits Commission and the Dole-Shalala Report. These provisions are intended to speed up VA/DOD joint efforts in processing medical and disability evaluations for those leaving service, as well as requiring DOD to use VA presumptions in establishing eligibility of service mem-

bers for disability retirement and for improving the disability evaluation system. It also requires a comprehensive policy by both agencies to address Traumatic Brain Injuries and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

- Concurrent Receipt for disabled retirees with 20 years and deemed unemployable by VA Retroactive payments to January 2005 would begin October 2008.

- Eligibility of Combat-Related Special Compensation to all military disabled (Chapter 61) retirees with less than 20 years of service.

- A national combat veteran reintegration program to provide families information, services, referrals and proactive outreach throughout the entire deployment process.

- A special payment of \$50 per month to survivors of members entitled to retired pay (or of Guard/Reserve retirees who died before age 60) whose SBP annuities are reduced by VA survivor benefits, effective October 1, 2008.

**New VA Secretary Sworn In:** Dr. James B. Peake, a combat veteran of the Vietnam War and former Army Surgeon General, was sworn in by President Bush yesterday as the nation's sixth Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Peake, who retired in 2004 as a three-star general, is a board-certified thoracic surgeon who began his Army career as an infantry officer in Vietnam, where he was awarded the Silver Star and two Bronze Stars with "V" device for heroism under fire, and two Purple Hearts for wounds sustained in combat. The new VA secretary stressed his commitment to easing the transition of the current generation of combat experienced men and women. He assumes leadership of the second largest cabinet department, with about 250,000 employees and a budget last year exceeding \$82 billion. More than 5.5 million veterans are expected to receive care this year in VA's 153 hospitals and 900 clinics. VA also provides disability compensation and pensions to 3.5 million veterans and family members and operates 125 national cemeteries.

Hope you all had a great Holiday and let's Support the Troops in 2008. At Ease!

# Interlake Bargaining Chair Report

By Eric Monical

Happy New Year to all!!

I want to say thank you to all who helped out and contributed to both the Needy Kids Fund and the Toys for Tots. \$1500.00 was collected for Toys for Tots with the Company donating \$500.00. Additionally, \$812.00 was donated to the Needy Kids fund. Both funds are equally important as they allow kids to go in and shop for much needed clothing including hats, boots and gloves. The Toys for Tots drive tries to ensure that every child has at least one gift under the tree on Christmas morning. Livingston County desperately needs to keep these drives going so that every child has needed clothing and can believe in the spirit of Christmas. There is nothing sadder than a child without a present on Christmas day. I want to put together some raffles throughout the year so we can really show Livingston County what the U.A.W. can do for our community. So let's all work together this year and make these drives the best we can.

The Grievance Committee has been doing a great job with settling grievances and we just settled over 22 overtime grievances, that were set for Arbitration,

totaling almost \$3000.00. The Committee stayed firm on what was in the contract and the departmental overtime procedure. The Company agreed 16 hours work per day is maximum and if an absence is scheduled, the absence may be covered by an associate scheduled for eight hours, provided the associates' position is not backfilled. If the absence cannot be covered by an associate scheduled to work eight hours, the call in process will be initiated. The Company agreed on a definition of backfilling as "an Associate is not available for transfer if his/her position is then filled by another associate". The Committee has been able to get a couple of people back in the plant and are working on a few more. In all fairness, I have to give some credit to our new plant manager, Ron Bakos; we couldn't have progressed without him. Ron has been in all grievance meetings so far, something neither of the past two plant managers would do. Also, he has kept to his word about working fairly with the Union and changing the attitude of Management with the Union. The Grievance Committee and I can see the changes being made so far working with Ron and we are looking

forward to the coming year with a positive outlook for Interlake and the U.A.W.

I want everyone to know that Union member Sgt. Leo Ruiz, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalion, Fort Louis, Washington is back to work from an extended military leave. Leo was supposed to have come home earlier in the year but elected for a four-month extension. On October 4<sup>th</sup>, while on the extension, he was injured by shrapnel from a grenade. Leo has since recovered from the wounds to his thigh and knee and is back to work. I for one would like to say thank you to Leo for his time away from his family and friends and for risking his life to better ours. If you see Leo let him know how much you appreciate his sacrifice.

I am also taking this moment to inform our membership that we have lost a member here at Interlake. On Dec.31<sup>st</sup> Mark Fornero passed away. Mark was hired on July 24, 2006 as a Material Handler and after two weeks he signed a bid to Assembly, where he has welded since on third shift. Mark will be missed by his fellow workers. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family!

## **15<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL LOCAL 2488 TEAM HANDICAP BOWLING TOURNAMENT**

Open to all union members, retirees, spouses and dependents over age 18.

**TOURNAMENT DATE: Sunday, February 10, 2008**  
**CHECK-IN: 12:15pm; BOWL: 1:00pm**

USBC Certified; Entries Close at Midnight on January 25, 2008

Top 3 teams pay, plus plaque for 1<sup>st</sup> place

**ENTRY FEE: \$25.00 per person**

Each entry must be paid in full payable to UAW Local 2488.

**Mail entries to:** UAW Local 2488 Tournament Management  
10226 E 1400 North Rd, Bloomington IL 61704

CIRCLE LANES  
1225 HOLIDAY LN.  
BLOOMINGTON IL

1<sup>st</sup> Place team wins \$1,404.00 (based on 32 teams)

Entry forms may be picked up at the Union Center, UAW Plant Office or the website at [www.uaw2488.org](http://www.uaw2488.org).

## **UAW 2488 VETERANS COMMITTEE 16th ANNIVERSARY SUPER BOWL Fund Raiser / Raffle / Party Drawing February 3, 2008**

- 1st Prize:** 42" Panasonic Plasma TV
- 2nd Prize:** 32" JVC LCD TV
- 3rd Prize:** Sony Portable Playstation 2
- 4th Prize:** Sony 7.2 mg Digital Camera
- 5th Prize:** 1-night stay for 2 Chateau
- 6th Prize:** 1- night stay for 2 Eastland Suites
- 7th Prize:** \$50 Biaggi's Gift Certificate
- 8th Prize:** \$50 Hooters Gift Certificate

Party to be held at the Union Hall from 4:00pm until end of game (must be 18 or older to attend); Everyone is welcome; refreshments and food served.

Tickets are now available and can be purchased from any Veterans Committee member or at the Union Center.

## Comparing the 2008 Presidential Candidates' Positions on HealthCare



**Candidate: Hillary Clinton; Current Title: U.S. Senator from New York**

Health Care Plan Summary: Plan requires everyone to purchase insurance and provides subsidies to make coverage affordable. Plan would allow people to keep their existing coverage or buy coverage through Federal Employees Health Benefit Program. Plan also requires large employers to provide coverage or help pay for it.

Proposes to fund the plan by:

-using revenue generated by capping the federal income tax exclusion of employer health contributions for households making more than \$250,000 (\$2 billion).; -discontinuing the Bush tax cuts for households making more than \$250,000 a year (\$52 billion).; -redirecting money currently given to hospitals for uncompensated care.; -using cost savings from the elimination of waste and inefficiency in the current system.



**Candidate: Barack Obama; Current Title: U.S. Senator from Illinois**

Health Care Plan Summary: Plan requires that all children be insured and that all employers either cover their workers or pay into a public insurance plan. The plan also allows people to keep their existing coverage or purchase coverage through a new purchasing pool called the National Health Insurance Exchange that offers competing private and public options.

Proposes to fund the plan by:

-discontinuing the Bush tax cuts for wealthy families.; -using cost savings from the elimination of waste and inefficiency in the current system.



**Candidate: John Edwards; Current Title: Former U.S. Senator from North Carolina; Lawyer**

Health Care Plan Summary: Plan requires employers to cover employees or to help finance a public insurance plan and that requires all individuals to have coverage by 2012. Expands Medicaid and SCHIP, reforms insurance laws to contain costs and creates regional non-profit purchasing pools with competing public and private plans to choose from. Plan also allows individuals to keep their existing coverage.

Proposes to fund the plan by:

-discontinuing the Bush tax cuts for wealthy households earning more than \$200,000.; -using cost savings from the elimination of waste and inefficiency in the current system.



**Candidate: Dennis Kucinich; Current Title: U.S. Representative from Ohio**

Health Care Plan Summary: Plan expands Medicare to cover everyone, replacing private and public insurance as described in HR 676. Plan would be single-payer, allowing only public or not-for-profit providers to participate.

Proposes to fund the plan by:

-initiating a new 3.3 percent payroll tax for employers and employees in addition to the existing 1.45 percent Medicare payroll tax that would replace current employer/employee system.; -repealing President Bush's tax cuts for the wealthy.; -enacting a stock transfer tax.; -using cost-savings from the elimination of waste and profit in the system.



**Candidate: Rudy Giuliani; Current Title: Former Mayor of New York City; Lawyer**

Health Care Plan Summary: Plan will shift incentives from the current employer-based system of insurance to the individual market without guaranteeing universal coverage or affordability. Plan offers tax credits to help low-income families pay for insurance. Plan offers the expansion of Health Savings Accounts with high deductible health insurance plans, creates large insurance pools for small businesses, and deregulates the insurance industry.

Proposes to fund the plan by:

-increasing efficiency in the current system.; -repealing health insurance tax exclusions for employees.



**Candidate: Mike Huckabee; Current Title: Former Governor of Arkansas**

Health Care Plan Summary: Plan would use tax credits and other tax incentives to encourage people to buy private insurance. The plan would expand Health Savings Accounts with high deductible health insurance plans to everyone, but does not address affordability or universal coverage.

Proposes to fund the plan by:

-encouraging innovation in the private market.; -making health insurance tax deductible for more families.; -increasing efficiency in the current system.



**Candidate: Fred Thompson; Current Title: Former U.S. Senator from Tennessee; Actor**

Health Care Plan Summary: Has not yet released a detailed plan. Generally supports increased focus on preventive care, tax credits, and market based reforms.

No specific proposal to fund reforms.

## Illinois State CAP Primary Election Endorsements

The following endorsements were made based on a combination of the voting records for incumbents, questionnaires, interviews, and recommendations by the various area CAP Councils across the state. Positions of the candidates on worker issues were the main priority when considering whether to endorse the candidates.

Listed below are the endorsed candidates and the position they are running for:

### Illinois Senate

38th District—No Endorsement  
44th District—No Endorsement  
47th District—John Sullivan (D)  
50th District—No Endorsement  
53rd District—No Endorsement

### State Representatives

73rd Dist. —No Endorsement  
74th Dist. —Don Moffitt (R)  
75th Dist. —Careen Gordon (D)  
76th Dist. —Frank Mautino (D)  
87th Dist. —No Endorsement  
88th Dist. —No Endorsement  
91st Dist. —Michael Smith (D)  
92nd Dist. —Jehan Gordon (D)  
98th Dist. —Gary Hannig (D)  
100th Dist. —No Endorsement  
101st Dist. —Robert Flider (D)  
103rd Dist. —Naomi Jakobsson (D)  
104th Dist. —No Endorsement  
105th Dist. —David Tomlinson (R)  
106th Dist. —No Endorsement  
110th Dist. —No Endorsement

### US Senate

Sen. Dick Durbin (D)

### US Representatives

11th CD—Debbie Halvorson (D)  
15th CD—Steve Cox (D)  
17th CD—Phil Hare (D)  
18th CD—No Endorsement  
19th CD—No Endorsement

## UAW International Executive Board Takes 'No Endorsement' Position in Presidential Primaries

**Detroit** - The UAW International Executive Board has taken a position of “no endorsement” at this time in the upcoming presidential primaries.

“UAW members are vitally concerned about the future direction of our country,” UAW President Ron Gettelfinger said. “We encourage our active and retired members to participate as individuals in caucuses and primaries.”

“We’ll have a number of candidates to choose from -- especially on the Democratic side -- who are listening and responding to the concerns of working Americans. We’ve heard a number of thoughtful and important proposals which would advance workers’ rights, address America’s health care crisis, promote U.S. manufacturing jobs and reverse our failed trade policies,” said Gettelfinger.

“There’s a healthy diversity of opinion among UAW members as to which candidate can most effectively challenge the special interests who want to capture our government on behalf of the wealthy and the privileged,” said Gettelfinger. “UAW members will be actively involved in efforts to elect a president and members of Congress who will address the critical needs of working people.”

As a result of the “no endorsement” position taken by the International Executive Board, UAW local unions, retiree chapters, Community Action Program (CAP) councils and other bodies will not be endorsing presidential candidates at this time.

## Presidential Candidates’ Position on HealthCare (cont’d)



### Candidate: John McCain; Current Title: U.S. Senator from Arizona

Health Care Plan Summary: Plan will end tax preference currently benefiting employees with health insurance through their workplace. Plan would expand tax credits to help all individuals and families buy private insurance coverage. Proposes to control health care costs by changing provider payments and through tort reform.

Proposes to fund the plan by reforming the tax code to eliminate the bias toward employer-sponsored health insurance.



### Candidate: Mitt Romney; Current Title: Former Governor of Massachusetts

Health Care Plan Summary: Signed a comprehensive health care reform law while Governor of Massachusetts. Has not yet released a detailed plan on the federal level. Encourages coverage that vary state by state through market-based reforms. Supports the expansion of private insurance, but does not address affordability; supports tax credits for health coverage.

Proposes to fund the plan by:

-using funding from annual assessments on insurance providers and hospitals, state, and federal grants.; -encouraging states to redirect money for uncompensated into premium assistance for low-income people to purchase insurance.



### Candidate: Ron Paul; Current Title: U.S. Representative from Texas

Health Care Plan Summary: Has not yet released a detailed plan. Generally supports current market-based insurance system, expanding Health Savings Accounts and tax credits for individual coverage.

No specific proposal to fund reforms.

## December Benefits Report

For the month of December, 17 medical and dental insurance claims were resolved through the UAW Benefits office resulting in additional payments of \$10,003.45. This brings the total for the year to 442 claims totaling payments of \$300,992.62.

The yearly total is 32 bills totaling payments of \$81,631.11.

### Class Schedules for Spring 2008

It is that time again to talk to our children who are 19 years of age or older (but younger than 25). Class schedules need to be turned in to avoid a lapse of coverage.

### Tuition Assistance Program

Just as a reminder, applications for this benefit can be submitted at this time. It will reflect the 2008 taxable income.

### BC/BS of Illinois Website

This site proves to be very useful to our

members. Not only can members use the site to check on providers who are in our network but they can also use the site to review claims as they are being processed. Check it out, [www.bcbsil.com](http://www.bcbsil.com)

**We hope all members will reflect back and understand what is bargained at the table can be jeopardized by those who we elect to public office to represent us. Please take time to inform yourself and your family as to who the best person is to help the working class people of this country. Where do we stand on issues such as Health Care for all? Why should we be the only modernized country not to have a form of National Health Care? Should we accept the fact that there are currently 47 million Americans without adequate healthcare? Most of these are children and the elderly. Is it right that many seniors go to bed at night and wonder whether or not they will**

**be able to afford the high cost of prescription drugs? We should also look for answers as to where the politicians stand on the issue of defined pensions. When will they force employers who agreed to fund these programs to carry out their obligations? Too often employers are given the right to under fund and then they are given the right to take more than a decade to catch up. These are only a couple of examples of issues that should be researched before giving someone the privilege of our vote.**

As always we look forward to hearing from our members if you are having any problems that you may need help dealing with. Please contact us, Kathy Noble – 888-8008, John Powell – 888-7366 or Gary Nichols – 888-8015.

### Mayer's Attempted Smear Discredited (reprint from 1/2008 Press Release) *UAW Local 974 Debunks False Allegations Against Gordon*

Local 974 of the United Auto Workers today set the record straight regarding recent comments made by the Allen Mayer campaign and local unions questioning their endorsement of Jehan Gordon and her campaign for State Representative.

UAW Local 974 President Dave Chapman made the following statement:

“We received an anonymous letter two weeks ago that contained the same inaccurate information that has been spread to the media by the Mayer campaign over the past few days. The allegation was that Jehan Gordon worked for NAFTA Opportunity Center. We investigated the allegation and determined that it was untrue. Jehan Gordon worked for the Illinois Small Business Development Center. These are two completely different entities. It's unfortunate that the Mayer campaign has chosen to take this inaccurate information, and use it to make outlandish charges against the candidate we've chosen to endorse.

“Our Union has a long and proud history in this country and especially this area.

We take our endorsements very seriously. For the Mayer campaign to imply that we would endorse a candidate for any office that is not 100% behind the working people we represent is offensive.

“These accusations against our union and Jehan Gordon further illustrates that we chose the right type of candidate to win back this seat for the Democratic Party. On behalf of the more than 2000 members we represent in the 92nd District, I want to state very clearly that we have chosen to endorse Jehan Gordon for State Representative, and we will continue to support her.”

“I am so grateful for the support of the UAW and the working families they represent” said Gordon. “Their values are my values: education for our children, more jobs in the 92nd District and access to quality health care. As State Representative, I promise to bring a different kind of leadership to Springfield, one where we focus on issues important to the working families of Peoria County.

### Sign Up for Email Updates

With two major contract negotiations taking place at the Local this year. The Local is re-starting our information updates via email.

Many of you participated in this program before. We are now in the process of gathering email addresses for those who wish to receive these email updates.

To sign up everyone must re-submit their email address to the Local. This can be done two ways: 1) go to the website at [www.uaw2488.org](http://www.uaw2488.org) and click on the “**Join Email List**” link to fill out the information; or 2) contact the Union Center and give us your email information.

This is a great communication tool for the coming year. Please make sure to sign up.

## Union Presidential Delegate Elections

Based on the information we have, the following Labor/Union members are candidates who are running for the position of Union Presidential delegates to the Presidential Candidates.

When you go to the polls you will also be asked to select a political party as delegates to represent presidential candidates at their upcoming political conventions. The following are a list delegate candidates and the presidential candidate they are choosing to represent.

### Clinton

Rocky Raikes, Laborers (11th CD)  
Mike Matejka, Laborers (11th CD)  
Caryl Wadley-Foy, AFSCME (11th CD)  
Charlotte White, IBEW (11th CD)  
Robert Markham, Operating Eng. (18th CD)  
Terry Fairclough, Carpenters Ret. (18th CD)

### Obama

John Penn, Laborers (11th CD)  
Mary "Kathy" Terven, Plumbers (11th CD, alt.)  
Steve Preckwinkle, IFT (18th CD)

### Edwards

Tom Whalen, Laborers (11th CD)  
Michael Smith, Laborers (11th CD)  
Kelly Reffett, CWA (11th CD)  
Jerry Wright, AFSCME (15th CD)  
Deborah Klehm, Laborers (18th CD)  
Dave McBride, Laborers (18th CD)  
Robert Schroeder, Laborers (18th CD)

## UNION JOBS MEAN



## A BETTER COMMUNITY

## Working Family Issues

America has an important decision to make. Our next president will shape the future for working families. Find out where the 2008 presidential candidates stand on the most important issues for working families. Go to [www.aflcio.org](http://www.aflcio.org).

- **Employee Free Choice Act**

America's working families are struggling to make ends meet and our middle class is disappearing. The best opportunity working people have to get ahead economically is by joining together in unions to bargain with our employers for better wages and benefits. But the current system for forming unions and bargaining is broken. Employers routinely intimidate, harass, coerce and even fire workers who try to form unions and bargain for economic well-being. The Employee Free Choice Act (H.R. 800, S. 1041) would level the playing field for workers and employers and restore our freedom to choose a union.

- **Good Jobs**

America's workforce is under pressure, facing stagnant wages, rapidly rising health care costs, disappearing retirement benefits and an overall lack of job security. It's taken 10 years for America's minimum-wage workers to get a raise, and families are still struggling to get by on what they earn. The next president must put a high priority on ensuring that the U.S. economy is creating good jobs at good wages.

- **Health Care**

America has a health care crisis. Forty-seven million Americans have no health insurance, while millions more are feeling the pressure of skyrocketing costs and inadequate coverage. Our health care system needs serious, comprehensive reform that will provide guaranteed affordable health care for all. Download a comprehensive chart comparing health care proposals of the presidential candidates and analyzing whether they meet the AFL-CIO principles for health care reform.

- **Trade & Manufacturing**

U.S. trade deals in recent years have cost America's workers millions of jobs and lowered living and working standards for workers globally. The next president must fight for a trade policy that supports, rather than hurts, working families here and abroad.

- **Retirement Security**

After a lifetime of work, retirees deserve a basic level of security. But employer-provided pensions are disappearing and Social Security is under threat. The next president must strengthen Social Security, rather than allow dangerous privatization schemes, and protect workers' pensions and retirement savings.

- **Education**

Every child deserves a world-class public education and access to affordable higher education. America's future—our ability to compete globally and grow economically—depends on what we're willing to provide to our children.

Visit the Official UAW Local 2488 website  
[www.uaw2488.org](http://www.uaw2488.org)

## The Meaning of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

**By Coretta Scott King**

*(From the King Center website, [www.thekingcenter.org](http://www.thekingcenter.org))*

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday celebrates the life and legacy of a man who brought hope and healing to America. We commemorate as well the timeless values he taught us through his example -- the values of courage, truth, justice, compassion, dignity, humility and service that so radiantly defined Dr. King's character and empowered his leadership. On this holiday, we commemorate the universal, unconditional love, forgiveness and nonviolence that empowered his revolutionary spirit.

We commemorate Dr. King's inspiring words, because his voice and his vision filled a great void in our nation, and answered our collective longing to become a country that truly lived by its noblest principles. Yet, Dr. King knew that it wasn't enough just to talk the talk, that he had to walk the walk for his words to be credible. And so we commemorate on this holiday the man of action, who put his life on the line for freedom and justice every day, the man who braved threats and jail and beatings and who ultimately paid the highest price to make democracy a reality for all Americans.

The King Holiday honors the life and contributions of America's greatest champion of racial justice and equality, the leader who not only dreamed of a color-blind society, but who also led a movement that achieved historic reforms to help make it a reality.

On this day we commemorate Dr. King's great dream of a vibrant, multiracial nation united in justice, peace and reconciliation; a nation that has a place at the table for children of every race and room at the inn for every needy child. We are called on this holiday, not merely to honor, but to celebrate the values of equality, tolerance and interracial sister and brotherhood he so compellingly expressed in his great dream for America.

It is a day of interracial and intercultural cooperation and sharing. No other day of the year brings so many peoples from different cultural backgrounds together in such a vibrant spirit of brother and sisterhood. Whether you are African-American, Hispanic or Native American,

whether you are Caucasian or Asian-American, you are part of the great dream Martin Luther King, Jr. had for America. This is not a black holiday; it is a peoples' holiday. And it is the young people of all races and religions who hold the keys to the fulfillment of his dream.

We commemorate on this holiday the ecumenical leader and visionary who embraced the unity of all faiths in love and truth. And though we take patriotic pride that Dr. King was an American, on this holiday we must also commemorate the global leader who inspired nonviolent liberation movements around the world. Indeed, on this day, programs commemorating my husband's birthday are being observed in more than 100 nations.

The King Holiday celebrates Dr. King's global vision of the world house, a world whose people and nations had triumphed over poverty, racism, war and violence. The holiday celebrates his vision of ecumenical solidarity, his insistence that all faiths had something meaningful to contribute to building the beloved community.

The Holiday commemorates America's pre-eminent advocate of nonviolence --- the man who taught by his example that nonviolent action is the most powerful, revolutionary force for social change available to oppressed people in their struggles for liberation.

This holiday honors the courage of a man who endured harassment, threats and beatings, and even bombings. We commemorate the man who went to jail 29 times to achieve freedom for others, and who knew he would pay the ultimate price for his leadership, but kept on marching and protesting and organizing anyway.

Every King holiday has been a national "teach-in" on the values of nonviolence, including unconditional love, tolerance, forgiveness and reconciliation, which are so desperately-needed to unify America. It is a day of intensive education and training in Martin's philosophy and methods of nonviolent social change and

conflict-reconciliation. The Holiday provides a unique opportunity to teach young people to fight evil, not people, to get in the habit of asking themselves, "what is the most loving way I can resolve this conflict?"

On the King holiday, young people learn about the power of unconditional love even for one's adversaries as a way to fight injustice and defuse violent disputes. It is a time to show them the power of forgiveness in the healing process at the interpersonal as well as international levels.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is not only for celebration and remembrance, education and tribute, but above all a day of service. All across America on the Holiday, his followers perform service in hospitals and shelters and prisons and wherever people need some help. It is a day of volunteering to feed the hungry, rehabilitate housing, tutoring those who can't read, mentoring at-risk youngsters, consoling the broken-hearted and a thousand other projects for building the beloved community of his dream.

Dr. King once said that we all have to decide whether we "will walk in the light of creative altruism or the darkness of destructive selfishness. Life's most persistent and nagging question, he said, is 'what are you doing for others?'" he would quote Mark 9:35, the scripture in which Jesus of Nazareth tells James and John "...whosoever will be great among you shall be your servant; and whosoever among you will be the first shall be the servant of all." And when Martin talked about the end of his mortal life in one of his last sermons, on February 4, 1968 in the pulpit of Ebenezer Baptist Church, even then he lifted up the value of service as the hallmark of a full life. "I'd like somebody to mention on that day Martin Luther King, Jr. tried to give his life serving others," he said. "I want you to say on that day, that I did try in my life...to love and serve humanity.

We call you to commemorate this Holiday by making your personal commitment to serve humanity with the

Martin Luther King, Jr. (cont'd from pg. 10)

vibrant spirit of unconditional love that was his greatest strength, and which empowered all of the great victories of his leadership. And with our hearts open to this spirit of unconditional love, we can indeed achieve the Beloved Community of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s dream.

May we who follow Martin now pledge to serve humanity, promote his teachings and carry forward his legacy into the 21st Century.



**President Ronald Reagan signs legislation enacting the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday**

## Get Involved!

Throughout his years of public service, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. encouraged everyone to participate in community service.

"Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don't have to know about Plato and Aristotle to serve. You don't have to know Einstein's "Theory of Relativity" to serve. You don't have to know the Second Theory of Thermal Dynamics in Physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love, and you can be that servant."

Excerpted from "The Drum Major Instinct", a sermon by Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1968. Available on CD and print in *A Knock At Midnight: Inspiration from the Great Sermons of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.*

## How Can YOU Be Great?

Using technology provided by [serveNet.org](http://serveNet.org), The King Center is looking for individuals interested in getting involved helping to build Dr. King's Beloved Community! Go to [www.thekingcenter.org](http://www.thekingcenter.org), click the tab on the left side of the page titled King Holiday. You will find more tabs leading you to the area to sign up to get involved beyond just the Holiday.

## Premier Bargaining Chair Report

By Bill Raleigh

As I had previously written in the last Union Spirit, we did receive a favorable decision on our VSP arbitration case that came in mid-November. As for the details of the decision, we were awarded ten active employees a VSP package. Employees will be given VSP by seniority if possible. With the plan being completed by August 1, 2008.

As I am writing, the Company has released four employees, which has created a number of job openings. We have gone through four different stages of job bidding thus far. The company has been very willing to work with the Union to handle all the unforeseen things that may have been created from the large amount of movement.

You will be seeing many new faces as the company starts replacing some of the old, familiar faces. I want to take the time to wish Sam Martin, Roger Moore, Jeff Reeser and Jack Altman the very best from all of us at UAW Local 2488.

These guys have not only been our co-workers for the better part of 20 years, but they have also been our friends.

Take care and be safe!

Another shutdown has come and gone. As I stated last month, our #1 priority was safety and I can happily say that there were no reportable accidents during the shutdown period, even with the amount of work that was handled. Excellent Job!!

Now that the new year is upon us we must look at the upcoming elections. We have all been through them before but unlike many in the past, this election may very well surpass the importance of elections in the past years. After six plus years our country is still at war and, with rising gas prices, it has created a growing stress on our economy as well. Some believe that the declining economy has early symptoms of becoming a recession. And, if that is not enough, most politicians don't even want to attempt to resolve our growing health care problems.

I know that the campaign ads on TV and in the newspapers are all in full swing and I know how tired and old they are quickly becoming, but I urge everyone to try and pay very close attention to the messages. Listen to what they are trying to say. Additionally, try to hear what they are not saying. Use your best judgment and common sense in choosing the right candidate for you. Those two resources, common sense and judgment, have been around much longer than politicians, lawyers and political parties. Some say it is your duty, your privilege and your right as an American to exercise your voting abilities. However you feel about it doesn't really matter as long as you take the time to vote—that is the American way.

On another note, I want to send get well wishes to Mike Ryan, Jack Altman and Rick Virden's wife who is recovering from open heart surgery.

# UAW Local 2488

10226 E 1400 North Rd  
Bloomington, IL 61704

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit No. 622  
Bloomington, IL



## Verizon Store Workers Vote Union

On October 30, 2007, employees at the Bloomington Verizon Plus store voted unanimously to be represented by IBEW Local Union 51. The workers were unified on several issues, with job security being a major factor. Contract negotiations began December 10, 2007. Business Representative Rod Brandt will be negotiating on their behalf. The store is located at 2103 N Veterans Pkwy. Please patronize the store to show support for our new brothers and sisters.

### Recapitulation as of November 30, 2007

Income	92,242.55
Expenditure	<u>85,719.22</u>
Excess of Income over Expense	6,523.33
Regular Dues received	1630
Per Capita Taxes	
International Union, UAW	44,596.61
IL State CAP Council—Region	2,877.20
Transnational Council	90.93
IPS Steel Council	33.10
IPS Council Pooled Arb. Fund	59.31
Retirees Council (Ret. Dues)	<u>9.10</u>
Total Per Capita Taxes	47,666.25

Thomas Shrier, Financial Secretary  
A more detailed financial report is available at the  
Membership Meetings.

## Thank You

The Ryan Richardson family wishes to thank the membership for showing their support with the cards and donations. It was greatly appreciated.

### Workers Compensation Attorneys

From Katz, Friedman, Eagle, Eisenstein, Johnson and Bareck will be at the Union Center on the following dates to answer Workers Compensation questions.

**Richard Johnson**  
Wednesday, **February 6 & 20**, 2008  
10:00am—5:00pm

**Phil Bareck & Chris Mose**  
Call for an appointment

**Downstate Injury Hotline: 1-800-444-1525**