



the **BOILERMAKER** **Activist**

POWERING AMERICA'S FUTURE

For leaders within the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers, and Helpers Vol. 2 No. 1 March 2005

Local lodge elections are on their way

Plan now to make sure your lodge is ready to hold them

THIS YEAR, MOST Boilermaker local lodges in the United States will demonstrate that democracy is the backbone of the union: They will elect their leaders for the next few years.

Just as local, state, and federal elections are governed by rules of procedure, local lodge elections are governed by our International constitution, local lodge bylaws, and federal laws. You must ensure that your local lodge elections adhere to all these rules or you risk having your elections overturned.

Officers elected in June officially take office on July 1, regardless of the date of the regularly-scheduled lodge meeting.

The rules are very specific. You should have already received a circular letter advising you about the rules, with attachments that explain the procedures. The summary given here is intended only as a reminder of the main points of those materials. If they conflict in any way, the circular letter and attachments rule.

Nominations and voting

OUR INTERNATIONAL constitution requires that nominations of candidates for local lodge office be made at the regular May meeting.

Nominees must be present to accept their nomination, unless kept away by illness, official union business, or some unavoidable circumstance. If absent from the nominating meeting, the nominee must submit written confirmation to the meeting that he or she will accept the nomination, along with confirmation of eligibility to run for and hold office.

Elections will be held at the regular June meeting. Lodges may set a special election meeting date different from the regular meeting date, but only if they do so at the regular April meeting. If the lodge sets a special date for the election, it must be in June.

Where necessary, the International president may authorize or require the lodge to use a mail ballot. For example, the International president has ruled that all railroad lodges must use mail ballots.

Where mail ballots are used, specific procedures prescribed by the International president must be followed.

The International president has also prescribed specific procedures for absentee ballots for members unable to attend the June meeting.

All local lodge elections are conducted by secret ballot. The procedures for mail ballot and absentee ballot ensure the secrecy of the member's vote.

Who can vote and hold office

EVERY MEMBER IN good standing is eligible to nominate and vote for officers, with a few exceptions explained in Articles 28 and 30 of the constitution. The lodge must notify all members in good standing by mail at least 15 days before the date set for nominations and 30 days before elections. These notices may be combined.

Members who have been actively working under the jurisdiction of the International Brotherhood or actively seeking and available for work under the jurisdiction of the International



Union elections are the best kind of democracy in action.

Brotherhood for at least 12 months immediately prior to the nomination date are eligible to hold office. So are full-time salaried officers or representatives of the International Brotherhood, its subordinate bodies, or any department of the AFL-CIO. Members on leave of absence from these positions also may be eligible.

To be eligible for office, members must also be free from delinquency of every nature to the International Brotherhood and must have been members in good standing for at least two years prior to the time of nominations. Article 28 also details a few other requirements. For example, apprentices, trainees, and members working in supervisory positions are not eligible.

The local lodge secretary-treasurer must have complete membership records

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Elections

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available at the nomination meeting and verify the eligibility of all nominees.

Ballots and campaign materials

SOME OFFICERS ARE, by virtue of their office, also delegates to the Consolidated Convention. In such cases, the ballots for these offices must indicate as much.

Candidates for local lodge office may distribute campaign material **at their own expense**. Local lodges must provide reasonable assistance to any candidate wanting to distribute material, but **no lodge funds may be used to promote any member's candidacy**.

All candidates must receive equal treatment as to procedure and use of facilities.

Funds of the lodge can be used to issue notices of elections, factual statements not involving candidates, and other expenses necessary for holding the election. No candidate may accept campaign contributions from employers, either directly or indirectly.

Confused? Need more help?

IF YOU STILL aren't sure how to handle a specific problem, phone the International for assistance at 913-371-2640.

Construction lodges, please phone the Construction Division office and ask for Clay Herford or Skipper Branscum.

All other lodges, please phone headquarters and ask for Bill Creeden, Gary Prochnow, or Bryan King.

International offices are open 8:30am to 4pm, Central time, Monday-Friday. □

Summaries of Upcoming Legislation

THESE ARE A FEW bills that will be heavily debated throughout the year. For more information on these and other proposed legislation, contact the Department of Government Affairs, (703) 560-1493.

Energy Policy

FROM THE CALIFORNIA meltdown to the Northeast blackout to volatile natural gas markets, one crisis after another has demonstrated the need for comprehensive energy reform. Comprehensive reform would provide stimulus to our economy while ensuring consumers reliable access to affordable energy.

Derail deregulation

EXPERIMENTS IN MANY states have demonstrated that electricity deregulation puts supply and reliability at risk. Deregulation puts energy security in the hands of companies that are responsive only to stockholders, not the public, as was obvious during the California crisis.

The Public Utilities Holding Company Act (PUHCA) has protected consumers and investors since the 1930s and should be strengthened, not repealed.

Clean coal cleans the air

WE CAN SPUR job creation and clear the skies by investing in clean coal technology. Investing in clean air equipment reduces nitrogen oxide and sulfur oxide emissions from coal burning factories and power plants while creating jobs for Boilermakers who install, maintain, and repair this technology.

Promoting clean coal is an investment in the security of our nation. Coal is our nation's most abundant source of energy. Its efficient use keeps energy dollars in the United States.

The Boilermakers strongly support funding for the Clean Coal Power Initiative, including investment in integrated gasification combined cycle (IGCC) technology. We reject proposals to deregulate the electrical power industry and repeal PUHCA's consumer protections.

Minimum Wage

THE SENATE HAS defeated two minimum wage proposals, one sponsored by Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.), the other by Rick Santorum (R-Pa.). However, raising the minimum wage is still a live issue, as are the anti-worker initiatives contained in Sen. Santorum's proposal.

Although **Sen. Santorum's amendment** would have raised the minimum wage by \$1.10 over an 18-month period, it would also have **exempted thousands of small businesses from all provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act**, which establishes the minimum wage, the 40-hour week, and other worker protections. Another provision would have allowed businesses to use "flex-time" to keep from paying overtime wages.

Sen. Kennedy's amendment would have raised the minimum wage from \$5.15 per hour to \$7.25 per hour in three 70-cent increments.

The minimum wage has been \$5.15 since 1996, during which time it has lost one-fourth of its purchasing power, according to the Consumer Price Index.

Bankruptcy Bill

MORE BAD NEWS for consumers. The Senate has passed a bankruptcy law written by lobbyists from bank and credit card companies. The new bankruptcy law reduces the protections that declaring bankruptcy provides for American working families hit by huge medical bills or other financial problems.

Wealthy families will still be able to create trusts to protect their assets, and crooked companies like Enron will still be allowed to declare bankruptcy under favorable conditions.

But working families will have to pay higher fees to file, and they could lose their homes. Currently, many state laws allow bankrupt individuals to keep their homes.

In a letter to Congress, 104 bankruptcy law professors predicted that "the deepest hardship" would "be felt in the heartland," where the filing rates are highest. □

the BOILERMAKER Activist

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Published by the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers to assist local lodge leaders.

Submit articles and ideas to
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Beware of imitators — “union” companies with no ties to a union

Companies offering special deals for union members don't always deliver

YOU MAY HAVE already received solicitations from *unionmembersweb.com* or *unionmemberdiscountservices.com*. Both of these Web sites solicit union business by claiming to offer discounted services and products to all union members.

These two are the latest in a long line of companies that hope to gain the trust of union members by claiming some special connection to the union movement.

Neither of the Web sites mentioned above is affiliated with the Boilermakers union or the AFL-CIO. **We do not endorse their services.** Do business with them at your own risk.

Anyone can use the word “union” in their name. Whether they truly offer discounts to union members is not clear. It is not even clear whether they sell any merchandise or services.

But we know that the Union Plus and Union Privilege programs, both of which are endorsed by both the AFL-CIO and the Boilermakers union, offer real discounts for bona-fide union members.

Union Privilege was created by the AFL-CIO in 1985 to develop benefit programs for members of AFL-CIO unions and their families. John Sweeney, president of the AFL-CIO, is the chair of the Union Privilege board of directors. All programs offered by Union Privilege carry the Union Plus trademark, and all Union Plus program promotions are approved by each participating international union.

If a Web site does not carry the Union Plus trademark, it is not a part of the Union Plus program.

Watch out for logo grabbers and report them

THE INTERNET HAS speeded up communication and opened entire new worlds to surfers. But it also allows crooks and cheats to operate with little or no



effort. Some send spam (unwanted e-mails that go to millions of people every day), and some steal identities.

We've heard all about people who steal your identity and then ruin your credit, running up huge bills in your name. But few people talk about another kind of identity theft — stealing logos and reusing them to sell merchandise.

The Boilermakers logo is reserved for the use of our local lodges, councils, and International. Local lodges may purchase items printed with the logo and sell them or give them away, but individuals and businesses cannot.

If you see Boilermaker logo items for sale by a company or individual — anyone other than the union — please report these sales to the International.

Printing your own logo items

YOUR LOCAL CAN print items bearing the Boilermaker logo and sell them or give them away. In fact, it's a good idea. When your members wear logo items, they raise community awareness of your local.

The Communication Department will supply camera-ready logos for this purpose. Your local is free to contract with any printer to create logo items.

The International recommends two specialty printers with which we have had good, long-term good relationships:

Jeffrey L. Ford
Appreciated Advertising
Office 913-722-6565
Fax 913-722-1209

Dan Woerhman
Callenders Printing & Promotions
913-371-0330
E-mail: callenders@birch.net

How do I ...?

Tips for dealing with headquarters

How do I get a story in the Boilermaker Reporter?

Send it in. The goal of the editors of *the Boilermaker Reporter* is to keep members informed on what is happening in all areas of the union. If your local — or a member of your local — does something that you want other Boilermaker members to know about, it probably belongs in our paper.

Simply write down the basic facts along with your name, your phone number, and the best time to call you. Our editors will make sure the story looks good in print. We will also send you a copy before it goes to press to make sure we got the facts correct.

What about photos?

We love photos. Readers are more likely to read your story if they can see who did the deed. Here are some tips on taking and sending photos.

1. Plan ahead. Make a specific person responsible for taking the photos and follow up after the event to make sure they got the job done.

2. Move in close. The subject of the photo should fill the entire viewscreen. Don't worry about getting their feet in. Faces are what people want to look at.

3. Digital is okay. But you need to set the camera for high-resolution photos. No matter how many megapixels your camera can capture, a low-res photo will not look good in the newspaper. Your owner's manual should have directions on setting resolution. If not, call us.

4. We're here to help. Call us BEFORE you take your photos to figure out the best way to get the results you want.

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Preserve American shipbuilding — support our Navy

Bush's proposed budget cuts ship construction by one-third

PRESIDENT BUSH'S PROPOSED budget for fiscal year 2006 recommends only \$6.2 billion for the construction of just four new ships. That's a \$3.2 billion cut from the 2005 fiscal year appropriated budget, a reduction of more than one-third. What's more, the budget proposes to delay the construction schedule of the CVN-21 aircraft carrier and prematurely decommission the John F. Kennedy aircraft carrier.

These actions will decrease the carrier force from 12 to 10 in the middle of a war. If enacted, the president's proposal would result in 70,000 jobs lost in the shipbuilding industry and related manufacturing.

The proposed budget also threatens to send more shipbuilding jobs overseas.

Faced with budget cuts that keep them from buying new ships made in the

United States, the Department of Defense has begun taking long-term leases on foreign-built ships.

These contracts are "de facto" purchases. They violate the intent of a law that requires the Armed Services to only buy ships built in the United States.

The Coast Guard is following suit. They recently changed their interpretation of "Buy-American" to allow them to buy ships that use foreign-built macro modules. This interpretation allows modules that are attached to the superstructure of a vessel to be constructed in foreign yards.

The Boilermakers Department of Government Affairs calls on all local lodges in the U.S. to contact members of the

House and Senate Armed Services Committees and the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to let them know that we believe ships used by the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard should be wholly built in the United States.

We also support increasing the Navy's budget by \$874 million, using the \$743 million budgeted in the National Defense Sealift Fund to buy 13 used MPS ships under long-term lease, retaining 12 aircraft carriers, and increasing funding for the CVN-21 in 2006 to keep on schedule.

For more information on U.S. shipbuilding issues, contact the Boilermakers Department of Government Affairs, or visit (www.boilermakers.org) and click on LEAP. □



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