



Labor Fax

December 1, 2004

Volume 8, Issue 13

'TIS THE SEASON

By Charles Wowkanech & Laurel Brennan

Thanksgiving is behind us, decorations are up and trees are lit, and the malls are packed with parents shopping for their children and children hoping to meet Santa. It's the holiday season again!

Between holiday parties and wish lists, eggnog and mistletoe, it is easy for us to get caught up in the craziness of the season and forget what the holidays are really about. No matter which holiday you celebrate this time of year, it is important that we all remember that holidays are about family, and families are about togetherness.

We hope that this year, in addition to spending time with your families and enjoying the spirit of the season, you also take time to think about the nearly one million member family that you are a part of as a member of a labor union in New Jersey.

Your union family is there for you all year long to fight for your rights in the workplace, as well as the rights of all working families across the state. Obstacles are often thrown in our way, but together we fight for better wages, improved benefits, job protections, safer working conditions. In short, we fight for better lives for all.

You can contribute to the labor movement this holiday season by making sure that as you check off items on your families' wish lists you do so with union made, and union sold products. Buying union protects the jobs of our union family members, strengthens the labor movement, and puts non-union companies on notice that we stick together and will continue to fight for social and economic justice.

For more information about supporting good jobs and giving union made gifts visit www.Shopunionmade.org.



1998
Labor Fax
APEX Award

Labor Fax Co-Editors:

Charles Wowkanech

President

Laurel Brennan

Secretary-Treasurer

Associate Editor:

Steve Lenox

(609) 989-8730 • www.njafclcio.org

STILL NOT SAFE?

A recently released survey reveals that many union members believe that the plants they work in are still susceptible to a catastrophic event either caused by terrorist attacks or unintentional incidents. Only 38% of those surveyed believe that their employers have taken appropriate steps to protect their facilities from an attack. The survey, conducted by the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers (PACE) International Union, and released on October 28, was completed by local union presidents working in 133 sites across the country; 125 of which revealed that they had enough chemicals or other hazardous materials large enough to cause a catastrophic event. In response to the findings David Ortlieb, PACE Director for Health and Safety Programs, urged companies to "make available more training in prevention and emergency response."

LEADING THE WAY

In recognition of the successful Occupational Safety and Health Training Program the New Jersey State AFL-CIO has conducted for 5 years, New Jersey Acting Governor Dick Codey, through the New Jersey Departments of Labor and Workforce Development and Environmental Protection, has designated the State Federation as the lead organization to develop and implement safety and emergency response training at high risk facilities throughout the State. This training will serve as a vehicle to protect both the workers employed at risk facilities as well as residents living in the surrounding communities. For more information about OSHEP Training call Christine Rampolla, Program Coordinator at 732-418-3427.

OSHEP ADVISORY BOARD

The Occupational and Health Education Advisory Board held its first meeting on Tuesday, November 23, 2004 at the Rutgers Labor Education Center. Participants included Congressman Frank Pallone (D-6), New Jersey Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development Thomas Carver, New Jersey Commissioner of Environmental Protection Bradley Campbell, and 28 other representatives of labor, business, academia and government. The newly created Board's accomplishments include the creation of a mission statement; a mandate to develop curriculum and deliver training on plant security; identification of emergency response planning, building strategic health and safety committees, and motor vehicle safety in the workplace as priorities for public training programs; and the directive to create a sub-committee to plan an Occupational Safety and Health Conference this Spring in conjunction with Workers' Memorial Day.

- NJ State AFL-CIO: The Voice for Working Families in New Jersey -

ON THE ROAD

Officers and Staff of the New Jersey State AFL-CIO:
 ...Participated in veteran's job fair at Somerset/Hunterdon One Stop Center.
 ...Attended State Employment and Training Commission Meeting at Rutgers University.
 ...Provided LEAP follow-up training for UAW 2315 worker advocates at Dallas Airmotive in Millville.
 ...Participated in job fair for displaced workers at Dallas Airmotive Plant in Millville.
 ...Addressed students about labor movement at Ramsey High School.
 ...Facilitated meeting of Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Board at Rutgers University.
 ...Conducted OSHEP Train-the-Trainer course at Rutgers University.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

An overwhelming majority of 91 teachers and other workers at the Guttenberg School District voted for a voice on the job with the New Jersey State Federation of Teachers, and AFT affiliate. Forty midlevel supervisors at Ocean County College also voted for the union.

LEADING THE WAY

Acting Governor Dick Codey has tapped Mr. Thomas Carver to serve as the new Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development. Mr. Carver has previously served as the Assistant General Manager of Newark International Airport and as President of the New Jersey Casino Association and the New Jersey Aviation Association. Acting Governor Codey also announced that he has selected Mr. Fred Jacobs to serve as the Commissioner of Health and Human Services and Mr. Rolando Torres to serve as Commissioner of Personnel. All three appointments must be approved by the New Jersey State Senate.

Upcoming Events

January 12, 2005	Retirees Committee Rutgers Labor Center
February 8, 2005	PEC Meeting Trenton
February 16, 2005	HAAC Meeting Trenton
March 3-4, 2005	Apprenticeship Conference Atlantic City

FOR THOSE THAT SERVED

As a result of efforts by Congressman Chris Smith (R-4), legislation to increase federal benefits to disabled veterans by more than \$2.5 billion over the next five years was recently signed in to law. This new law, the twelfth veterans law written by Congressman Smith, and subsequently signed into law in the past four years, is expected to increase the monthly payments of more than 50,000 veterans in New Jersey as well as to nearly 6,000 surviving spouses and dependents.


BATTLE OF THE 'BIG BOX'

S-2080, sponsored by Senator Steve Sweeney (D-3) and Senator Tom Kean (R-21), and A- 3504 sponsored by Assemblyman Neil Cohen (D-20) and Assemblyman Jon Bramick (R-21) were recently introduced. This legislation seeks to provide a planning tool to local governments to better assess the impact of 'big box' retail stores such as Wal-Mart, on their communities, employees, the local economy, traffic and tax base. Unfortunately, many of these stores have had a negative impact on the communities in which they open, particularly on their workforce, often paid low wages with few, if any benefits. The Assembly State Government Committee held a public hearing on the bill attracting over 300 union members and receiving testimony from many interested parties. The bill is expected to be voted on in both Senate and Assembly Committees later this month.

THE PROBLEM WITH 'BIG BOX'

Rutgers University recently chronicled many of the effects of the growth of 'big box' stores to the supermarket industry in New Jersey in a study entitled "Economic Impact of New Jersey's Supermarket Industry". The supermarket industry, which according to the report is highly unionized, employees nearly 70,000 workers, and has a long-standing record of volunteerism and charitable giving, stands to be devastated by the continued proliferation of 'big box' retailers in our state.

Shop Union for the Holidays



**GIVE
THE GIFT
OF GOOD JOBS**

This holiday season, support good jobs by giving union-made gifts. Your shopping dollars can keep good-paying jobs – with good wages and benefits – in your community.

**For a fine selection of holiday gifts,
go to: www.shopunionmade.org**

Union Label & Service Trades Dept., AFL-CIO