

Miscellaneous

Please call the Union Hall with any changes to your name, address, telephone, etc.

Helpful Email Addresses

SMW International Assoc.
smwia.org

SMW Int'l Job Bank
smwia.org "go to members"

SMW National Pension
smwnpf.org

Union Plus Benefits
unionplus.org

Union Fidelity Federal Credit
Union
unionfidelityfcu.com

Texas AFL-CIO
texasaflcio.org

Texas Workforce Commission
twc.state.tx.us

Zenith Administrators
Zenithadm.com

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Union Hall Office
713-864-4594

Union Hall (Orange/Beaumont)
409-745-2581

Houston JATC
713-869-5843

(Orange/Beaumont) JATC
409-745-2581

Credit Union
713-869-9053

Zenith Administrators
713-219-1200

Pension Fund
800-231-4622

Texas Workforce Commission
281-983-1100

Brother and Sisters,

The Sheet Metal Worker Preamble reads in part, "In this age of organized effort it is essential that those engaged at our trade must likewise organize in order to establish and maintain desirable working conditions and thus provide for themselves and their families that measure of comfort, happiness, and security to which every good citizen is entitled in return for his labor from a deep sense of pride in our trade, to give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay."

"When our employers are prosperous, we share in their success through better wages and good benefits for now and future generations. We, in turn, must be productive. Every single job that is aggressively bid and won must be completed on time and within budget, keeping to our high standards by doing work better than anyone else."

Michael J. Sullivan
General President
S.M.W.I.A.

UNION SHEET METAL WORKERS

**WORK HARD
-
LIVE WELL**



Sheet Metal Workers Local Union #54

Sheet Metal Workers Local Union #54
900 West 34th Street
Houston, TX 77018

Phone: 713-864-4594
Fax: 713-864-4598

July 2007, Issue #1

Sheet Metal Workers Local Union #54

Tinner's Talk

Business Managers Report by Doug McGee

Greetings Brothers and Sisters. I hope and pray that all of you and your families are doing well. I am writing to inform you of the state of our union.

Building construction across the Houston and Orange area is at an all time high. Our union contractors are capturing their share of the work, somewhere between 15% to 20% of the market. For the most part, all of our members are working. Since January of this year, we have added and welcomed approximately 100 new/former members into the workforce.

On the work front, our industrial contractors are overloaded with work. Most are working two shifts and are working our members overtime. It doesn't appear that it will end any time soon. In addition, we are in need of industrial journeymen, apprentice applicants and helpers to work in these shops. If you know anyone that has construction experience, has good character, good work ethics, is drug free and has reliable transportation, please refer them to the union hall so we can get them to work.

The HVAC sector is picking up steam. Dynamic Systems, Inc. was awarded the Baylor College of Medicine Medical Complex project located in the Houston Medical Center that will begin early in 2008 and will last for approximately 3 years. Gowan, Inc. recently announced they have work through 2010. They have secured projects such as the Galveston National Laboratory, Memorial Herman P.O.B. 5, 22 story (I-10 & Gessner), Feigin Building, 8 story addition (Houston Med Center), Chevron HPC 2, complete renovation, 50 stories in Downtown Houston, and the Methodist Lab, 44 million dollar project (Houston Med Center). There are

several other large HVAC projects that Gowan is bidding/negotiating in the Medical Center. Prime Mechanical is busy with mid size jobs in the Houston and Galveston Medical Centers. Straus Systems has projects of all sizes across the greater Houston area. They recently were awarded the Baylor Eye Institute, Toyota Administration Building and the Children's Museum of Houston.

I believe we are securing jobs for two reasons; jobs are difficult and require large quantities of highly skilled manpower in a short period of time, and the construction market currently has more projects going on than there are contractors to do the work. The end result is more union construction. But let's look at the big picture. Organized labor overall has a poor market share and image. Most owners, developers and general contractors believe we are: too expensive, unions have an excessive benefits package, unions strike, unions have jurisdictional issues and restrictive work rules, union workers are spoiled and they've heard about or experienced bad things while building union. You and I know this is BULL! and Now is the time to change our image. We can do this by committing to our Business Partners (our contractors) the "UNION PROMISE" that union sheet metal workers will: be productive, work safe, be drug free, produce quality product, be profitable, be highly skilled, support continuing education, be team players, have good attitudes and most importantly, be professionals. Whether you're a journeyman, apprentice, classified worker or pre apprentice, you are part of the team and at the end of each day, each and everyone of you are a direct reflection of our union.

It's no secret, we are more expensive than our non-union competition, and if we don't add value to the job in some way, why would

anyone want to use us? That's right, no one will pay more without some sort of added value. So I ask each of you to take the "UNION PROMISE" to heart and by doing this we will add value to the job, restore our image and grow our market share. Let's show them we are the best in the business and that we are the BEST KEPT SECRET. Our survival depends on it!

Thank you for your understanding and thank you for being the finest construction workers in the industry.

In solidarity,

Doug McGee, Business Manager/
F.S.T.

**Local 54 meets the
1st Monday of
Every Month at
7:00 p.m.**

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Health & Welfare Report By Chairman Doug McGee

Our Health Insurance Fund for Journey-men and Apprentices, operates on a Plan Year from July 1 through June 30 each year. I am pleased to report through March 31 of this year (9 months), we have an operating gain of \$481,939.61. Income from employer contributions and investment returns during this period were \$3,596,058.02, benefit and operating expenses for the same period were \$3,114,118.41. Total assets ending March 31, 2007 were \$7,663,349.28.

As a reminder, effective January 1, 2007, the Trustees approved a \$300 Wellness Benefit paid at 100% for each member and/or dependent on PPO charges in network per calendar year. The \$30 office

visit co-payment will continue to be the participant's responsibility. Examples of Wellness Benefits are: Cholesterol Tests, Diagnostic X-Rays, EKG's, Immunizations, Mammograms, Pap Smears, Stress Tests, and Physical Examinations.

In addition, the Trustees added a CIGNA Dental PPO Plan effective January 1, 2007. You and your eligible dependents now have \$500 in dental benefits annually. For a list of dental benefits log onto www.zenithadm.com and click on "Details & Documents."

As you know, our Fund is self funded. This means Fund assets and benefits represent your hard earned hourly contributions. It is for this reason our Fund

requires a demographic form to be completed each year, or your claims will be denied.

This requirement is not intended to create a hardship on you or your family. It is a prudent decision by the Trustees to ensure benefits are paid only to eligible members and dependents, thus preserving Fund dollars and providing participants with valuable benefits.

Most of your Health Insurance questions can be answered by visiting the Zenith website, www.zenithadm.com or you can call Zenith direct at 713-219-1200.

SUPPLEMENT YOUR RETIREMENT WITH A 401 (K) PLAN

You are eligible to participate, on a voluntary basis, in the Sheet Metal Workers National Supplemental Saving Plan (NSSP).

The NSSP is a comprehensive 401 (k) plan, with competitive investment options, detailed reporting and access to a wide range of educational opportunities. As with all 401 (k) plans all contributions to the NSSP are made pre-tax, the money grows in your account tax deferred. You are responsible for taxes *only when* you take a

distribution. It is a great way to supplement your retirement income. Minimum contribution to the plan is \$0.15 per hour, or higher in \$0.05 increments; \$0.20 per hour, \$0.25 per hour, \$0.30 per hour, etc. However, I strongly encourage participants to contribute no less than \$0.50 per hour, because each participant pays approximately \$60 per year in administration costs, regardless of the size of his/her account.

To enroll, you must complete an en-

rollment form and beneficiary form which must be mailed to ATPA in Alexandria, VA. In addition, you must complete a 401 (k) authorization form informing your employer of the hourly contribution rate. Your employer and the local union can provide you with the necessary forms.

If you have any questions or would like a 401 (k) booklet, call the NSSP investment coordinator at 800-847-4015.

News from the East End by Trey Berryman, Business Representative

Work was good in 1984 when I started my apprenticeship at Duffy's Inc. After many highs and lows in work, I am happy to report that work is as good as I've ever seen and the outlook for the near future is even better. The industrial and marine shops are real busy, and the HVAC shops have steady work.

The Golden Triangle, Business Round Table has conducted a contractor manpower availability study,

here are some of the results: From April 2007 through 4th Qtr 2009, the Golden Triangle will have a need of an additional 23,462 craftsperson. Current manpower availability of skilled and unskilled contractor maintenance and construction labor (union and merit) for Jefferson, Orange, Hardin and East Chambers Counties is approximately 13,317 construction workers. Last year at this time it was estimated that approximately 7,838 construction workers were available. We have met with the Texas Work-

force Development Board and have provided them a list of signatory contractors so they can verify that we are getting a chance to bid some of this work. In closing, stay safe and drink plenty of water in this heat. Till next time,

Trey Berryman, Business Representative

Officers/Staff of Local 54

Doug McGee, Bus. Mgr/FST
Stanley Bordovsky, Bus. Rep.
Trey Berryman, Bus. Rep.
(Beaumont/Orange)
Billy Kenyon, Local Organizer
Anthony DeMary, Local Organizer
(Beaumont/Orange)
Jan Wilbanks, Admin. Assist.
Richard Stanfield, Director of Training
Lorraine Satterfield, Admin. Assist.
Armando Aguirre, President
Roy Perry, Vice-President

Dale Danton, Exec. Board #1
Wayne Glass, Exec. Board #2
Michael West, Exec. Board #3
Jim Brzymalkiewicz, Trustee #1
Ruben Ramirez, Trustee #2
Manual Villegas, Trustee #3
Michael West, Trustee & All Funds
Gene R. Williams, Conductor

Wage Rates Building Trades Journey Man Effective April 1, 2007

Houston Jurisdiction Wage Rate	
Basic Wage	\$23.13
(\$0.50 per hr. Credit Union Savings Plan Deduct after taxes.)	
NPF	4.29
Insurance	4.07
ITI	.12
Nemi/Smohit	.05
Local Train.	.20
Ind. Fund	.15
Total	\$32.01

Orange/Beaumont Jurisdiction Wage Rate Effective July 1, 2007

Basic Wage	\$21.07
(\$0.50 per hr. Credit Union Savings Plan Deduct after taxes.)	
NPF	3.82
Insurance	4.07
ITI	.12
Nemi/Smohit	.05
Appr. Fund	.25
Ind. Fund	.19
Sasmi	.87
College	.05
Total	\$30.49

* Houston contract expires on March 31, 2008 and Orange contract expires June 30, 2008. Negotiation will begin approximately three months prior to the expiration of each agreement. *

Membership

Houston Jurisdiction		Beaumont/Orange	
Journeyman	439	Journeyman	72
Apprentices	50	Apprentices	20
Retirees	250	Retirees	78
Pre-Apprentices	129	Pre-Apprentices	8
Classified Workers	27	Classified Workers	0
Production	279	Production	0
Maintenance	5	Maintenance	0
Total	1179	Total	178

Total Membership 1357
(As of May 30, 2007)

Dues DISABILITY DUES

If you become disabled and can not work at the trade due to injury or illness, you must request in writing to be placed on Disability dues. This request should include a letter from your physician stating your disability and should be forwarded to the Executive Board. Disability dues shall be paid monthly until the member returns to work. In addition, Journeymen and Apprentices granted disability dues and eligible for health coverage will have their hour bank frozen while on disability up to six (6) months. Monthly Disability dues are: Journeymen - \$30, Apprentices & Classified Workers - \$20 and PreApprentices - \$15. Members will not be allowed to pay more than one month of disability dues at any time.

UNEMPLOYMENT DUES

Effective June 1, 2004 dues rate for unemployed Journeymen is \$40 per month, Apprentices and Classified Workers \$25 per month and PreApprentices \$20 per month. To be eligible for this benefit you must be unemployed and your dues *must be paid current*. In addition, you must pay the unemployment dues rate on the 1st of each month or full dues rate will apply. Members will not be allowed to pay more than one (1) month of unemployment dues at any time.

If you return to work during the month in which you paid unemployment dues and work 40 hours in that month, you will be required to pay the difference between unemployment dues and full dues.

AVOID SUSPENSION!

*HAVE YOUR MONTHLY DUES
AUTOMATICALLY TRANSFERRED*

Using your credit union savings account with Union Fidelity Federal Credit Union, you can automatically transfer funds from your account to Local 54 to pay your monthly dues. This service is provided at no charge and is intended to pay your dues in advance as required by the SMWIA Constitution. Contact UFFCU at 713-869-9053.

In Memory of

Collier, Bobby J.	01-13-05	#636	Buchanan, David	05-11-06	#652
Robertson, Wesley T.	02-14-05	#637	Gilbreath, B.J.	06-05-06	#653
Koval, Mary (Ernest)	03-02-05	#638	Richter, Glen	07-02-06	#654
Chavez, Rudolph	05-06-05	#639	Sosebee, Jerry, Sr.	05-20-06	#655
Anderson, J. W.	05-20-05	#640	Dowell, Homer C.	08-24-06	#656
Daigle, Harry	05-29-05	#641	Lloyd, Faye (Horace)	08-23-06	#657
Sciacca, Joseph	07-01-05	#642	Jones, Clarence	09-09-06	#658
Mortiz, Herbert E.	07-18-05	#643	McCorvey, Elwood	09-24-06	#659
Gregory, M.H. "Pete"	07-21-05	#644	Lesser, John	09-29-06	#660
Britton, Wesley	08-07-05	#645	Pierce, Robert "Catfish"	01-04-07	#661
Wagner, Lee "Buster"	10-31-05	#646	Ogg, Joseph C.	01-12-07	#662
Garrett, Robert	11-26-05	#647	Simkins, C. L., Jr.	02-26-07	#663
Parrott, Howard	01-26-06	#648	Mayfield, Charlotte (Al)	02-18-07	#664
Miller, Katheryn (Louis)	02-11-06	#649	Riggs, W. D.	03-07-07	#665
James. O.D.	03-05-06	#650	Miller, Lewis, Sr.	04-07-07	#666
Hickson, Orville	05-05-06	#651	Mullins, Dorothy (Richard)	04-17-07	#667
			Roark, Raymond	06-14-07	#668
			Cole, Don H.	06-19-07	#669

Jim Barton Fundraiser by Doug McGee

A BBQ fundraiser was held at the union hall on Saturday, May 19th 2007, for brother Jim Barton. Jim is 48 years old and is stricken with multiple myeloma cancer and his prognosis is uncertain. This is a very painful illness and his treatment is long term. He is unable to work in any capacity. The BBQ fundraiser alone generated \$7000 on Saturday. The weather was beautiful and the attendance and generosity at this event from friends, family and business associates was overwhelming to say the least. I can't express how proud I am of all the volunteers and supporters that made this a successful event. It's amazing what a union can do when we work together!

If you haven't donated to the Barton family and would like to put the "you" in Union, you can do so by mailing a check to the union hall or by contacting Union Fidelity Federal Credit Union to make a transfer from your account to Jim's account. Checks mailed to the union hall should be made payable to Jim Barton.

Special thanks goes out to the union brothers and sisters that hosted this successful event: Ken Krustchinsky, Mike Garcia, Larry McConnell, Mario Meza, Alex Vela, Jr., Vicki Jackson, Martin Flores and Don Taylor. In addition, I thank John Easton, Business Manager of the Interna-

tional Brotherhood of Electrical Workers local #716, for allowing us to use their 1st class BBQ Pit for our fundraiser. The brisket was outstanding!

Please remember Jim Barton and family in your prayers.



Standing - left to right: Michael Garcia, Larry McConnell, Don Taylor
Seated - left to right: Doug McGee, Kenneth Krustchinsky, Jim Barton, Quinton Bufford, Mario Meza

Our recognized sponsors for the event were as follows:
ACR (Beltway 8)
Adrian Garcia, Houston City Council, District H
Al Green, U.S. Congress, District 9
Anna Hernandez, State Rep. District 143
Annie Shaw, Harris County AFL-CIO
Brenda Romine, B&G Printing
Bill Rhodes, Zenith Administrators
Blumenthal Sheet Metal
Commercial Ventilation Services, Inc.

Constable Bill Bailey
Demeris BBQ
Dynamic Systems, Inc.
Edward Martinez Limousine Service
Gowan, Inc.
Gene Green, U.S. Congress, District 29
HEB Grocery
Houston Astros
Houston Sheet Metal Contractors Association
Industrial Sheet Metal
J.A. Sharman & Son
John Whitmire, State Senator, District 15
Melissa Noriega, Houston City Council At Large
Partners Metalfab
Patrick Flynn, Local Union Attorney
Plumbers Local 68
Prime Mechanical
Ram Tool
Ronald Green, Houston City Council At Large
Sabine Area Sheet Metal

Contractors Association
Sheet Metal Workers Local 54
Emergency Fund
Sheila Jackson Lee, U.S. Congress, District 18
Straus Systems
Sylvia Garcia, Harris County Commissioner, Precinct 2
Toni Lawrence, Houston City Council, District A
Union Fidelity Federal Credit Union
CIGNA Health Care
Williams & Bailey Law Firm
Weiser Sheet Metal



Life Safety Systems Course Attendees: Gary Lefever, Jerry Six, Kirk Knighton, Trevor Rios, Armando Aguirre, Don Viningre, Ed Shelton, Ruben Rodriguez, Kevin Brandt, John Crowson, Jake Ruttle, Benjamin Rodriguez, Jesus Lopez, Antonio Cardenas, Hector Garza, Gary Hagen, Gary Collier, Michael West, Juan Mata, Alfonso Mata, Paul Richbourg, Dale Denton, Pedro Sanchez, Roy Siebeneicher, Edward Gonzalez, Ken Cowart, David Lopez, Harold Bell, Fermin Sorto, Frank Guerrero, Ken Krustchinsky, Emiliano Guterrez, Javier Martinez, Mark Waltenbaugh, David Smith Jr., Roman Garza, Orlando Gonzalez, Bryan Grimm, Robert Pinner, Fransico Betancourt, Samuel Thompson, Bobby Sandidge, Michael Commins, Wayne Glass, Raymundo Gomez, Clinton Fontenot, Gary Andis - Instructor (bottom row, fifth from the left)

School News

Houston Area JATC

Congratulations to all Graduates of the Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 Class:

Ernest Arce Jr., Michael C. Arcos III, Jarrett G. Blackburn, Gilbert Garza, Joe Guerra, Sal Hernandez Jr., James M. Hudson, Alex S. Malagon, Eric L. Martinez, Ray Martinez, Antonio L. Montemayor, Derrick D. North, Michael L. Pope, Tully W. Rhodes, Charles H. Schultz, David L. Smith Jr., Noel Arellano, Chris L. Bennett, Marco G. Cardenas, Jerry Garza, Hector A. Garza, Johnny Ray Hall, Jr., Chris Lapham, Bertram Leonard, David Lopez, Stevie Martinez, Javier Martinez, Moses Orihela, David A. Rivera, Jake Ruttle, Jason L. Saarnio,

Adam C. Terpstra, Ivan Trevino, Jerry Vara, Noe Villegas. Special Acknowledgement goes out to Outstanding Apprentice Jason Saarnio, First runner up David Smith Jr and Second runner up Charles Schultz.

CEU's Granted: 46 Journeymen and apprentices (see above) completed 12 hour Life Safety Systems course, step one certifications pending test results.

ITI CSC Detailing Presentation: ITI CAD Specialist, Michael Keane gave a presentation to approximately 16 Journeyman and contractor representa-

tives over ITI's detailing program. Fall 2007 Classes will begin on August 28, 2007. Apprentices will be receiving class assignments by mail. If you have any questions, call the Training Center.

Upcoming CEU Classes: Contact the Training Center if you are interested in enrolling 12 hour welding refresher course, at which time D9 certification will be administered by CWI Ken Krustchinsky.

Last but not least, help us promote the **Strengthening of our union by helping to recruit the next generation of**

LABOR DAY CELEBRATION BENEFITING MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY ASSOCIATION

by Doug McGee, Labor Day Committee Member

The 2007 Labor Day Weekend BBQ Cook-Off will be held on Saturday September 1st and Sunday September 2nd, 2007 at the Pasadena Fairgrounds, 7902 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, Texas 77507. Gates will open at 10:00 a.m. each day. Local 54 will again, be a sponsor at this fun filled event and encourages each member and immediate family to attend.

The event will feature children's climbing games, moon walk, a petting zoo and pony

rides. Arts and Crafts Vendors will be on hand and the Harris County AFL-CIO will be conducting a silent auction. BBQ competition will begin Saturday morning and conclude on Sunday afternoon. Judging begins with the "Pork Butt" category on Saturday at Noon., "Chicken" at 2:00 p.m. and "Ribs" at 4:00 p.m. The judging will conclude on Sunday with "Beans" at Noon and "Brisket" at 2:00 p.m. If you or your spouse would like to be a judge for any or all categories listed above, contact the Local Union to register as a judge.

SMW Local 54 will serve BBQ and cold beverages on Saturday, September 1st beginning at Noon and ending at 5 p.m.

We need volunteers on Friday to help set up the cook-off area and on Sunday to break down camp and clean up. If you are interested and would like to help, call the Local Union at 713-864-4594.

WILLIAMS ♦ KHERKHER

John Eddie Williams, Jr. and his lawyers at Williams Kherkher, formerly Williams Bailey Law Firm, have been longtime friends to labor in Texas. We handle all serious, personal injury cases – including cases of exposure to asbestos, welding fumes, and other toxic materials. We help workers file compensation claims and represent them in arbitrations.

We also represent individuals who have been injured or killed from taking dangerous pharmaceuticals, such as Vioxx, Paxil and Avandia. To learn more, please contact us at (713) 230-2200 or visit our website at www.williamskherkher.com.

Williams Kherkher
8441 Gulf Freeway, Suite 600
Houston, TX 77017

Figure #2

HOW TEXANS VOTED

WASHINGTON - How the Texas congressional delegation voted last week:

House

1. Union organizing: Passed, 241-185, a bill (HR 800) enabling workers to vote for union representation by signing membership cards, with the union authorized as soon as a majority of workers declare their support. This would simplify existing National Labor Relations Act rules under which employers can demand campaigns that last several weeks and culminate in secret-ballot elections. Bill supporters said employers now use their control of the workplace to coerce workers against union membership, while opponents said Congress should never repeal the right to secret-ballot elections. A yes vote was to send the bill to the Senate.

2. Illegal workers: Defeated, 202, 225, a Republican bid to require unions to demonstrate that workers signing union membership cards under HR 800 (above) are U.S. citizens or legal aliens. While Republicans said the requirement would help secure U.S. borders, Democrats said it was up to the employers and the government, not unions, to police illegal immigration. A yes vote backed the motion.

3. Union salting ban: Defeated, 164-264, a Republican amendment to HR 800 (above) outlawing the practice of salting, in which pro-union workers join a company payroll mainly to help organize a union or, failing that, to generate charges of un-fair-labor practices against the company. A yes vote backed the amendment.

4. Foreign Investment oversight Voted, 423-0, to tighten federal scrutiny of deals in which a foreign government or its agent uses direct investment to gain control of a U.S. company. The bill (HR 556) intensifies oversight by the government's Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, requires CFIUS to regularly file public reports to

Congress on foreign investment activity and authorizes intelligence agencies to examine proposed deals. The bill is a response to events last year when a company owned by Dubai of the United Arab Emirates nearly gained control of major U.S. ports with CFIUS approval, then abandoned the attempt when Congress objected. A yes vote was to send the bill to the Senate.

	1	2	3	4
Gohmert (R) Tyler.....	N	Y	Y	Y
Poe (R) Humble.....	A	A	A	Y
Johnson (R) Plano.....	N	Y	Y	Y
Hall (R) Rockwall.....	N	Y	Y	Y
Hensarling (R) Dallas.....	N	Y	Y	Y
Barton (R) Arlington.....	N	Y	Y	Y
Culberson (R) Houston.....	N	Y	Y	A
Brady (R) The Woodlands....	N	Y	Y	Y
Al Green (D) Houston.....	Y	N	N	Y
McCaul (R) Austin.....	N	Y	Y	Y
Conway (R) Midland.....	N	Y	Y	Y
Granger (R) Fort Worth.....	N	Y	Y	Y
Thornberry (R) Clarendon...	N	Y	Y	Y
Paul (R) Lake Jackson.....	N	Y	Y	Y
Hinojosa (D) Mercedes.....	Y	N	N	Y
Reyes (D) El Paso.....	Y	N	N	Y
Edwards (D) Waco.....	Y	A	N	Y
Jackson Lee (D) Houston...	Y	N	Y	Y
Neugebauer (R) Lubbock...	N	Y	Y	Y
Gonzalez (D) San Antonio...	Y	Y	Y	Y
Smith (R) San Antonio.....	N	Y	Y	Y
Lampson (D) Stafford.....	Y	Y	N	Y
Rodriguez (D) San Antonio	Y	N	Y	Y
Marchant (R) Coppell.....	N	Y	Y	Y
Doggett (D) Austin.....	Y	N	N	Y
Burgess (R) Lewisville.....	N	Y	Y	Y
Ortiz (D) Corpus Christi	Y	N	N	Y
Cuellar (D) Laredo.....	Y	N	N	Y
Gene Green (D) Houston...	Y	N	N	Y
Johnson (D) Dallas.....	Y	N	N	Y
Carter (R) Round Rock.....	N	Y	Y	Y
Sessions (R) Dallas.....	N	Y	Y	Y

Y = Yea, N = Nay, A = Not voting
P = Answered "Present"

Pulled from the Houston Chronicle on July 15, 2007

Legislative Update By Doug McGee, B.M./F.S.T.

SHEET METAL LICENSING BILL DIES ON POINT OF ORDER

As you know, in the 79th Texas Legislative Session of 2005, we made a futile attempt to license HVAC Sheet Metal Workers performing duties on all commercial construction and renovation projects. House Representative Kevin Bailey, (D), sponsored the bill and helped us get a hearing with the Licensing and Administrative Committee. Although the bill died in committee after the hearing, we were given an interim study in August of 2006 which allowed us another opportunity in front of the Licensing and Administration Committee to plead our case for sheet metal licensing. We believed this would help set the stage for the 80th Legislative Session in 2007.

At the beginning of the 80th Texas Legislative Session of 2007, Representative Bailey filed HB 1281 on February 8th, 2007. The bill would; establish a licensing program with fees, for commercial sheet metal workers under the authority of the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation; require all workers, regardless of skill or classification, to be licensed as either a journeyman or apprentice/helper; provides for voluntary journeyman licensing examinations; mandates 6 hours of continuing education annually for all workers; requires criminal background checks; allows for non-resident license applications.

The bill was referred to committee and a hearing followed on March 20th, 2007 before the Licensing and Administration Committee. Nobody voiced any opposition to the bill and the Committee voted unanimously to place the bill on House Calendar. We were successful lobbying the Calendars Committee to vote our bill out of Calendars for second reading on the House floor.

On May 8th, 2007, Representative Bailey rose to lay out HB 1281 for second reading on the house

floor. As he began speaking in favor of sheet metal licensing, Representative Larry Taylor (R), rose and called a point of order. The Speaker of the House sustained the point of order and HB 1281 was dead in it's tracks. Just that quick, with the strike of the gavel, all of our hard work had failed.

Nevertheless, our efforts were not in vain. Relationships and allies were developed along the way which will help us in the future. We will continue to pursue licensing for sheet metal workers in the HVAC industry at the 2009 legislative session. The citizens in the State of Texas deserve HVAC systems of the highest standards so we can live, work and play in a safe and healthy environment.

Thanks to all of the following for supporting our licensing efforts:

- Joe Arabie, TX AFL-CIO
- Mike Cunningham, TX State Building Trades
- Glenn Rex, Houston Sheet Metal Contractors Association
- Jim Reynolds, Austin Sheet Metal Contractors Association
- Robert Bilnoski, Commercial Ventilation Services
- Burts Inc.
- Triangle Metals, Inc.
- Industrial Sheet Metal and Fabricators, Inc.
- A-1 Sheet Metal & A/C, Inc.
- Dynamic Systems, Inc.
- New Mexico Sheet Metal Contractors Association
- Gowan, Inc.
- Loden Hardwick Sheet Metal Co., Inc.
- Partners Metalfab
- Straus Systems
- Tennille, Inc.
- Weiser Sheet Metal, Inc.
- Blumenthal Sheet Metal
- Prime Mechanical

Figure #3

House

■ 1. Police, firefighter unions:

Approved, 314-97, and sent to the Senate a bill (HR 980) granting limited union rights to police, firefighters, corrections officers and other public safety personnel in all states. At least 20 states now deny collective-bargaining rights to public employees. The bill empowers state and local first responders to bargain over wages, benefits and working conditions but prohibits strikes by unions and lock-outs by employers. A yes vote was to pass the bill.

	1	2	3
Gohmert (R) Tyler.....	A	A	N
Poe (R) Humble.....	Y	Y	N
Johnson (R) Plano.....	N	Y	N
Hall (R) Rockwall.....	N	Y	N
Hensarling (R) Dallas.....	N	Y	N
Barton (R) Arlington.....	N	Y	N
Culberson (R) Houston.....	N	Y	N
Brady (R) The Woodlands....	A	Y	N
Al Green (D) Houston.....	A	N	Y
McCaul (R) Austin.....	Y	N	Y
Conaway (R) Midland.....	N	Y	N
Granger (R) Fort Worth.....	N	N	N
Thornberry (R) Clarendon...	N	Y	N
Paul (R) Lake Jackson.....	N	A	Y
Hinojosa (D) Mercedes.....	A	N	Y
Reyes (D) El Paso.....	Y	N	Y
Edwards (D) Waco.....	A	N	Y
Jackson Lee (D) Houston....	Y	N	Y
Neugebauer (R) Lubbock....	N	Y	N
Gonzalez (D) San Antonio...	Y	N	Y
Smith (R) San Antonio.....	N	Y	N
Lampson (D) Stafford.....	Y	N	Y
Rodriguez (D) San Antonio..	Y	N	Y
Marchant (R) Coppell.....	N	Y	N
Doggett (D) Austin.....	Y	N	Y
Burgess (R) Lewisville.....	N	Y	N
Ortiz (D) Corpus Christi.....	A	Y	Y
Cuellar (D) Laredo.....	Y	N	Y
Gene Green (D) Houston.....	A	N	Y
Johnson (D) Dallas.....	Y	N	Y
Carter (R) Round Rock.....	N	Y	N
Sessions (R) Dallas.....	N	Y	N

Key: N=No; Y=Yes; P=Present;
A=Absent or did not vote

Pulled from Houston Chronicle, July 22, 2007

Washington Politics by Doug McGee

In Washington D.C., the Democrats now have a slim majority in both the House and Senate. You may ask yourself if this is a good or bad thing. It really depends on what your political priorities and preferences are in life. You should know I do not support most of the Republican agenda nor do I agree with everything the Democratic Party stands for either. Let's face it, there is a lot of outstanding issues that we hear about daily, here are just a few:

Iraq War, Energy, Education, Foreign Trade, Corporate Tax Relief, Guns, Abortion, Gay Marriage, Jobs, Immigration, Health Care, Campaign Reform, Social Security, Medicare, Global Warming, Environmental Issues, Labor Law Reform and the list goes on.

All of these issues are important, some are just a little more significant to each of us than others. But, as your elected Business Manager, let me share with you what I see happening over and over again as it relates to each of you and the ever shrinking 13 million members of organized labor. Bottom line is this, House and Senate Republican's in Washington D.C. vote as a block, 99.9% of the time, against every labor issue that comes before them. It's my job to keep you informed on issues that affect your union and your employment. Republican's continue to attack what labor has fought for and won over the past century. The following is just a sample of their anti worker agenda:

- Privatize Social Security.
- Abolish defined benefit plans like our National Pension Fund.
- Eliminate payment of overtime and replace with comp time.
- Destroy Unions by making it more difficult for workers to join or form unions.
- Support National Right to Work
- Neglect to raise the minimum wage.
- Refuse to address rising cost of health care.
- Outsource good middle class jobs overseas.

- Attempt to repeal State and Federal Prevailing Wages for construction workers.
- Eliminate/weaken OSHA rules and regulations.

You can monitor all of these issues through the local newspaper and/or the internet. One example, H.R. 800, the Employee Free Choice Act, which would make it simpler and easier for workers to obtain a union contract with their employer, recently passed the House of Representatives (241-185) and needed 60 votes in the Senate for further consideration. Guess how our two Texas Senators, Hutchinson and Cornyn voted? That's right, they voted against H.R. 800 which would give workers a union contract addressing wages, benefits and working conditions, thus giving workers a voice at the workplace and restoring the middle class. Only one Senate Republican, Arlen Specter, from Pennsylvania, voted in favor of the Employee Free Choice Act. On the house side all of the Texas Republican delegation voted against this union bill. (See fig. 1 and 2 from internet, www.senate.gov and the Houston Chronicle)

Another example is H.B. 980. This bill would give limited union rights to policemen and firefighters allowing them to bargain with their cities, counties and municipalities for better wages, benefits and working conditions, but without having the right to strike. Although the bill passed the House of Representatives by a large margin, Representative Ted Poe was the only Republican in the Texas delegation that voted for this bill (see fig. 3 from Houston Chronicle). These two examples should give you an idea of the political atmosphere we currently endure. It's no wonder unions in Texas have a difficult time negotiating a decent contract for their members.

Regardless of your political affiliation, all of us, whether you are a registered voter or not, should be more active in communicating with our U.S. Senators and Representatives. When there is a burning issue, pick up the phone and call your Representative and tell them how you feel, or ask them how or what they intend to do to address your issue.

Don't be afraid to call your representative, they are people just like you, and normally you speak to the Representative's assistant. Rarely do they even ask your name, they usually just ask for your zip code when you call.

A good example of how effective phone calling U.S. Representatives can be was the defeat of the recent immigration bill that even the AFL-CIO opposed. Americans valued our citizenship so much, they made millions of phone calls to U.S. Senators to defeat the amnesty bill. This is evidence that Americans can make a difference when we make our voices heard.

If you are a registered voter and you aren't sure who your Representatives are, call the phone number on your voter's card and someone from the Secretary of State will tell you who your representatives are. I encourage you to write their names down on your voter's card, that way you'll be prepared to call them when an issue arises. You can also call the local union and someone will be able to help you with your questions. If you are not a registered voter, call us for assistance now.

Please remember, Organized Labor is the **ONLY** advocate for the working men and women in this country and we are what makes the middle class. A strong labor movement in the U.S. is essential to workers being respected as partners rather than corporate America's property.

I encourage each of you to become registered voters and stay abreast of issues that affect your jobs, your family and your quality of life, so we all may live with dignity and respect that all Americans deserve. Our future, your children and grandchildren's future, depend on it.

Until then, I pray for the day that hard working men and women in this state can stand side by side, hand in hand, with Texas Democrats and Republicans, and work together to pass fair and equitable legislation that's mutually beneficial for both business and American workers.

Figure #1

U.S. Senate Roll Call Votes 110th Congress - 1st Session
as compiled through Senate LIS by the Senate Bill Clerk under the direction of the Secretary of the Senate

Vote Summary

Question: On the Cloture Motion (Motion to Invoke Cloture on the Motion to Proceed to Consider H.R.800)

Vote Number: 227 **Vote Date:** June 26, 2007, 11:51 AM
Required For Majority: 3/5 **Vote Result:** Cloture Motion Rejected
Measure Number: H.R. 800 (Employee Free Choice Act of 2007)
Measure Title: A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to establish an efficient system to enable employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to provide for mandatory injunctions for unfair labor practices during organizing efforts, and for other purposes.

Vote Counts:	YEAs	51	NAYS	48
Vote Summary	Not Voting	1		
	By Senator Name	By Vote Position	By Home State	
Alphabetical by Senator Name				
Akaka (D-HI), Yea	Domenici (R-NM), Nay	Menendez (D-NJ), Yea		
Alexander (R-TN), Nay	Dorgan (D-ND), Yea	Mikulski (D-MD), Yea		
Allard (R-CO), Nay	Durbin (D-IL), Yea	Murkowski (R-AK), Nay		
Barrasso (R-WY), Nay	Ensign (R-NV), Nay	Murray (O-WA), Yea		
Baucus (D-MT), Yea	Enzi (R-WY), Nay	Nelson (O-FL), Yea		
Bayh (D-IN), Yea	Feingold (D-WI), Yea	Nelson (O-NE), Yea		
Bennett (R-UT), Nay	Feinstein (O-CA), Yea	Obama (D-IL), Yea		
Biden (D-DE), Yea	Graham (R-SC), Nay	Pryor (D-AR), Yea		
Bingaman (D-NM), Yea	Grassley (R-IA), Nay	Reed (D-RI), Yea		
Bond (R-MO), Nay	Gregg (R-NH), Nay	Reid (D-NV), Yea		
Boxer (D-CA), Yea	Hagel (R-NE), Nay	Roberts (R-KS), Nay		
Brown (D-OH), Yea	Harkin (D-IA), Yea	Rockefeller (D-WV), Yea		
Brownback (R-KS), Nay	Hatch (R-UT), Nay	Salazar (D-CO), Yea		
Bunning (R-KY), Nay	Hutchison (R-TX), Nay	Sanders (I-VT), Yea		
Burr (R-NC), Nay	Inhofe (R-OK), Nay	Schumer (O-NY), Yea		
Byrd (D-WV), Yea	Inouye (D-HI), Yea	Sessions (R-AL), Nay		
Cantwell (D-WA), Yea	Isakson (R-GA), Nay	Shelby (R-AL), Nay		
Cardin (D-MD), Yea	Johnson (D-SD), Not Voting	Smith (R-OR), Nay		
Carper (D-DE), Yea	Kennedy (D-MA), Yea	Snowe (R-ME), Nay		
Casey (D-PA), Yea	Kerry (D-MA), Yea	Specter (R-PA), Yea		
Chambliss (R-GA), Nay	Klobuchar (D-MN), Yea	Stabenow (D-MI), Yea		
Clinton (D-NY), Yea	Kohl (D-WI), Yea	Stevens (R-AK), Nay		
Coburn (R-OK), Nay	Kyl (R-AZ), Nay	Sununu (R-NH), Nay		
Cochran (R-MS), Nay	Landrieu (D-LA), Yea	Tester (D-MT), Yea		
Coleman (R-MN), Nay	Lautenberg (D-NJ), Yea	Thune (R-SD), Nay		
Collins (R-ME), Nay	Leahy (D-VT), Yea	Vitter (R-LA), Nay		
Conrad (D-ND), Yea	Levin (D-MI), Yea	Voinovich (R-OH), Nay		
Corker (R-TN), Nay	Lieberman (ID-CT), Yea	Warner (R-VA), Nay		
Cornyn (R-TX), Nay	Lincoln (D-AR), Yea	Webb (D-VA), Yea		
Craig (R-ID), Nay	Loft (R-MS), Nay	Whitehouse (D-RI), Yea		
Crapo (R-ID), Nay	McConnell (R-KY), Nay			