

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

May 2009

Submitted by Stan Wylie

Where does the time go? May already... I have to say the last few months have been brutal to the membership and to our Local as a whole. With the layoffs, the closures and the VSPP offerings the Qwest workforce is getting smaller and smaller every day. MV Transportation is feeling the same cutbacks and currently is looking at alternatives to layoffs which I will leave for Michael and Craig to talk about as they are in those negotiations.

While the last 4 months have been brutal, I do want to remind people that history has shown much more difficult times and labor does prevail. We just celebrated International Workers' Day on May 1st, also known as "The Real Labor Day". Virtually every country in the world uses May 1st as their Labor Day with the exception of the United States, Canada, & South Africa.

I talked a bit about this before regarding the long struggles of the labor movement and great sacrifice of many for the larger good. In 1884 labor unions passed a resolution to work towards achieving an 8 hour work day. At the time folks were being forced to work up to fourteen hour days seven days a week. On May 1st, 1886 labor had over 250,000 unionists involved in this struggle. Many employers had already conceded while many had not and strikes were called over the issue. At one particular rally in Chicago gun fire broke out with the police shooting into a crowd of strikers killing four and wounding many others. From that another rally in protest of those actions took place a couple days later at that rally a bomb was dispersed killing one and wounding over 70 people. Many activists were arrested for that who were then prosecuted, convicted and sentenced to death, several were hung. Eventually a few of them were pardoned because only one of those folks actually convicted was even at the rally and that individual was clearly on the stage when the bomb went off so clearly he did set the bomb off. It was never determined who actually participated in the bombing. While progress was made through the years the 8 hour workday was not really achieved until 1945. 61 years later... So the story here is be persistent, continue to fight, and remember we will always be here longer then management and what we achieve today will benefit others in the future. It is in our best interest to stay diligent and keep the pressure on. We will prevail, we will have losses and great struggle but we will prevail.

We have had a lot of terminations as of late but we also are making gains in grievances. We have won a few lately that have brought some folks back on payroll while clearly not enough we continue to fight for our members. MV Stewards have been successful in preventing several terminations by discussing with management before hand as problem solving. So that clearly is working as well.

On a side note it almost seems that Qwest is deciding to terminate to manage headcount these days. I am sure if any network manager reads this my phone will be ringing but it is only an opinion. The numbers of terminations in Network recently are alarming. I can only encourage all the members to work the best they can everyday. As long as everyone is doing what they should be doing then really there should be no issues. It only comes to play when there are "questionable practices". That said; I also believe firmly that many supervisors are at some degree encouraging "shortcuts" but at the same time upper level management does not condone such practice. It is quite obvious when the bus comes the supervisor is the first to get the hell out of the way. I can only encourage members that if they had been encouraged to take a shortcut that they make their supervisor stand in front of the bus with them. The bottom line here especially when it comes to outside tech's is to follow the network guidelines regardless of what anyone else says. That is the standard each member is held too.

We did some Advanced Stewards training here at the Local and I want to thank our Staff Representative Rick Sorensen for coming up for two days and doing that training. I also wanted to acknowledge the stewards who participated as well. We had Fred Klock, Marlene Tift, Kat Carroll, & Josh Cain from Qwest and Gary Cunningham, Larry Smith, & Becky Rounds from MV. It is very clear from the calls and questions I have gotten since that training that these folks learned a lot and is putting the knowledge to good use in representing our members. Thanks for all of you continuing to take time to learn to be better Stewards for our members.

Every year we give two \$1000.00 Dick "Skip" Wheeler Memorial scholarships. We put the applications in the newsletter and we will be drawing the names at the May Membership meeting so I would encourage all those that apply to come and watch the drawing. We hope to formally present them at the June Membership meeting and hopefully Dick's widow Wilma will be able to partake.

Leadership School is approaching as well. So any Stewards that have not attended need to fill out applications and get them turned into the local by June 1st so we have time to make a selection and get pathways approval or possibly apply for a District 7 scholarship for anyone who does not have a educational tuition assistance fund from their employer. I will ask the AVP's to ensure the applications get distributed to their respective stewards.

One last side note... April 22nd was Administrative Professionals' Day and I wanted to thank Cathy Sterbins. She works very hard every day and makes difficult things look simple. She assists all of our Stewards, AVP's, Michael, Debbie, Craig, & myself. She is point person for our vendors and continually makes sure our communications systems keep working. Thanks for everything and really it is a pleasure to work with you everyday!!!

