AFL-CIO Asks Members' Help In Comp Fight Back

The fight over Workers Compensation reform is far from over according to Joe Powell, President of the West Virginia Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

"There was an indication from some of the legislators that they thought the issue would blow over, but we are not going to forget," Powell said.

The AFL-CIO is embarking on a campaign to inform the public about legislation's voting record on the issue.

"A lot of the legislators who professed to be our friends did not assist us in fighting the Workers Compensation bill," he said. "We felt it necessary in the next election to inform not only our own members, but the working men and women of West Virginia as well," he said.

In order to fund the "media blitz" the AFL-CIO is making a rare request for donations from union members.

"We are requesting a one-time voluntary donation of $5.00, per member," Powell said "which will be used strictly for the Workers Comp issue in letting the people know

'There was an indication from some of the legislators that they thought the issue would blow over, but we are not going to forget.'

W.Va. AFL-CIO President Joe Powell

In fact, the only other time there was a donation drive was for a "war" chest to fight a Right-to-Work-for-Less battle that occurred during the 1980s.

That fight was very successful and such legislation has not been introduced for five years.

Members will be contacted by their business agents for details on how to donate. But ACT locals don't need to ask their members for more money.

The ACT Foundation is making the donation on behalf of its members.

"We'll do all we can to work with the AFL-CIO in this fight," said ACT Director Steve White.

ACT has already done a lot to keep the issue alive, White said. Before the Workers Comp vote ACT ran newspaper ads informing the public about the worst parts of the bill. ACT also ran ads in 31

Continued on page 3

Workers Picket Renovation Job

Six building and construction trades members recently staged a public information picket on Woodway Construction of Barboursville outside a renovation project in downtown Huntington.

The refurbishing of the old Huntington Department Store into a micro-brewery has been hailed by some as great economic development for the city.

However, Tim Milne, ACT's fair contracting representative, disagrees.

"We've heard all this hoopla about economic development, but that begins with a sound tax base," Milne said.

"We found out they were

Continued on page 3
Mark Estlack New Millwrights 1755 Business Agent

Ullum Gets International Post

Millwright Local 1755 of Parkersburg has recently seen a change of leadership.
Harold “Dick” Ullum, business agent for 12 years, has been named Representative to the General President of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America. His responsibilities include coordinator for the 2nd District Organizing Committee and a post on the 2nd District Steering Committee. The district covers West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey and the District of Columbia.

Ullum said his new position is challenging and he’s enjoying it very much. “It’s something new,” he said. “I’m experiencing the Brotherhood of Carpenters on a whole different level.”

The Carpenters will be increasing organizing and COMET training so “the members had better be prepared,” Ullum said.

Ullum was replaced by Mark Estlack who held the post of Assistant Business Agent for five and a half years.

“We have a quality organization in all respects,” Estlack said. "I intend to maintain the present standards and do whatever I can to improve it.”

Estlack said his duties in his new position. In 1972, after attending WVU and Fairmont State College, Estlack started in the trades as an apprentice. He taught for three years in the apprenticeship program and served in various delegate posts, committees and several local offices.

“I’m now looking forward to a bright future for Millwright Local 1755,” Estlack said.

Charles “Chuck” Craig is Estlack’s new assistant. Craig has been active in union affairs since 1975 when he came into the trades through the apprenticeship program. He served on the Millwrights’ executive board.

ACT Locals Organizing Political Committees

In Preparation For State’s 1996 Elections

Faced with a major setback at the polls last election and a stinging defeat over the Workers Compensation law in the state legislature, ACT affiliates are organizing to fight back.

In an effort to get the membership more active in politics, Raymond “B.B.” Smith, ACT’s legislative representative, is working with ACT affiliates to start local legislative committees.

“If we don’t get going we will have our clocks cleaned in 1996,” Smith said. “Let’s face it, our ‘friends’ have told us they don’t care about our endorsements any more.

“We need to let our members know early on how issues like the recent Workers Compensation fight are direct attacks on working families.”

“We need to let our members know early on how issues like the recent Workers Compensation fight are direct attacks on working families.”

Part of the plan is to have 100 percent voter registration in each local union.

“No one believes in the democratic system more than union construction workers,” Smith said. “If you love your country then you must take the time to get involved, vote, and be a part of the process.”

Local committees are needed to work on a variety of activities like finding candidates to run for office, helping at election time, lobbying legislators, writing letters to newspapers, and simply keeping their fellow members informed.

Some members have already signed up to be on their local’s legislative committee, but that’s just the beginning, according to Smith.

“I will meet with each local legislative committee and give them the tools they need to get started,” he said.

“We will be providing training and resources to back them up all the way.”

“We plan to bring all the committees together each year for a training and strategy session. These committees will be in on the decision making.”

If you are interested in being part of a legislative committee, contact your business agent or the ACT office for more information.

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**Political Committees’ First Members**

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<tr>
<th>Boilermakers 667</th>
<th>Carpenters 899</th>
<th>Plumbers and Fitters 83</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ron Bush</td>
<td>Bevin Seaman</td>
<td>Michael Browning</td>
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<td>B.B. Smith</td>
<td>Carl Nonamaker</td>
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<td>Bob Griffith</td>
<td>Carpenters1207</td>
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<td>Keith Andrews</td>
<td>Robert Sulphin</td>
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<td>Bricklayers 5,9,15</td>
<td>Cement Masons 887</td>
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<td>Leroy Hunter</td>
<td>Mark Smithson</td>
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<td>Billy Joe Smith Jr.</td>
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<td>Richard Wilson</td>
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<td>Tom Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carpenters 302</td>
<td>Laborers 543</td>
<td>Sheet Metal Workers 33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Randy May</td>
<td>Dave McComas</td>
<td>Jay Harrison</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Hanshaw</td>
<td>Henry Dillon</td>
<td>Dale Van Bibber</td>
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<td>Marion Priode</td>
<td>Steve Cook</td>
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<tr>
<td>William G. Burton</td>
<td>Painters 1144</td>
<td>Teamsters 789</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Jones</td>
<td>Harold Stephens</td>
<td>Tom Springer</td>
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<td>Timothy Norris</td>
<td>Dan Polling</td>
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Workers Picket

Continued from page 1 offering $4.75 per hour.”

“Surely, this can’t be considered economic development by any warped sense of the term.

After running a standard check on the company, Milline questioned whether they were in violation of the Wage Payment Collection Act and the Contractors’ Licensing Act.

The Wage Payment Collection Act requires a wage bond covering workers on a project. But Hardiman only registered two employees, when Milline speculates the total is more like 11.

AFL-CIO

Continued from page 1 papers across the state showing how legislators voted on the issue.

“Now, the Chamber of Commerce has begun running ads thanking the legislators who voted for the bill. They have the nerve to say it will protect the workers in the future,” he said.

“But they fail to mention the millions of dollars businesses owe to the fund and that injured workers and their families must make up the difference with less benefits. The public must know they are paying for something big businesses cheated them out of,” he said.

The Workers Comp problem is seen by many as a show of weakness for organized labor. In response ACT is planning on getting its members a lot more involved in politics in 1996.

Legislative committees are being formed at all ACT locals in order to be prepared for the 1996 legislative session and elections.

“We just lost a battle but the war will be decided next year. If we don’t start mobilizing now we will be in big trouble,” commented White.

The Contractors’ Licensing Act states contractors must pass a test in order to be licensed. Hardiman grandfathered in as an individual but didn’t become licensed after his company incorporated in 1993.

“Woodway is currently two years delinquent on its Business & Occupation taxes which I confirmed with the city auditor’s office,” Milline said.

“Woodway Construction’s track record suggests it must feel these laws don’t pertain to it.”

Members from Carpenters Local 302 and Laborers Local 543 put up a picket line to get the message out.

Because of the picket, area newspapers began covering the story, then West Virginia’s Division of Labor (DOL) became involved.

Milline informed the DOL of his findings and it issued two cease and desist orders, one for each violation, against the company.

“Violation of West Virginia’s laws is not sound business practice,” Milline said. “It’s not good for the economy.

“It affects everyone, not just union members.”

Laborers’ Get State Approval For Apprenticeship Program

The West Virginia Laborers’ Apprenticeship Program was officially signed into being early this year when union representatives met with government officials to sign the standards for the new Laborers’ Apprenticeship Program.

Wetzel “Corky” Harvey, West Virginia Laborers’ District Council Business Manager is Chairman of the Joint Apprenticeship & Training Committee (JATC).

Harvey commended the diligence and hard work of John Gilbert, Associate Director of the Mid-Atlantic Cooperation Trust in West Virginia, who “carried the weight of this initiative from start to finish.”

The documents were signed by Harvey, Dana Daugherty, State Director of Bureau of Apprenticeship Training, and Mary Jo Thompson, JATC Secretary and Director of Association Service for the Ohio Valley Construction Employers Council.

Training Fund Administrator/Apprenticeship Coordinator Joe Tamburin, said recognizing construction laborers as a craft by the U.S. Department of Labor is truly a historical event.

“The inception of this Apprenticeship Program marks a tremendous milestone for our organization and I am deeply honored to have been selected by the JATC to serve as the program’s coordinator,” Tamburin said.

To achieve journeyman status under the program, apprentices must complete 4,000 hours of on-the-job training, including general and specific skills.

In addition, individuals are required to attend 408 hours of off-site, related and supplemental hands-on instruction to be held by the West Virginia Laborers’ Training Fund staff.

“The skill requirements of the construction industry have changed dramatically over the last few decades,” Tamburin said.

“And if we’re going to be able to compete against the non-union element, we’ve got to be the best in the business,” Tamburin said. “We believe this program will provide the ways and means to reach that status.”

Attend the West Virginia Workers Memorial Day in remembrance of our brothers and sisters who have died on the job.

Stand Up

A Real Voice on the Job

THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE AFL-CIO LEADING THE FIGHT FOR AMERICA’S WORKING FAMILIES

Friday, April 28
6 p.m.
Benwood Park
Near Wheeling
State Route 2
(Use 4th Street Exit)
‘Pulp Fiction/Poison Promises’ To Air With New Discussion

Backed by federal and state Freedom of Information laws, ACT is uncovering many of the secret deals behind the Apple Grove Pulp and Paper mill project.

ACT is still fighting for access to all of the documents kept by state and federal agencies.

Some of the information revealed found so far includes the fact mill owners Parsons & Whittmores, based in Rye Brook New York want:
- State loans of $180 to $200 million.
- A series of road and bridge improvements costing taxpayers over $580 million.
- A lease agreement for their property to avoid property taxes.
- Super tax credits of perhaps $360 to $540 million according to notes on a letter from former Governor Arch Moore.

Another interesting topic of numerous internal memos is the negotiations over state water quality standards.

what we have said all along,” said ACT attorney Stuart Calwell.

“Secret deals were being made that jeopardized public health.”

“If ACT hadn’t gotten involved, West Virginia’s water age of Parsons & Whittmores pulp mill in Alabama as well as interviews with labor leaders, Apple Grove residents and Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, former Chief of Naval Operations, a staunch adversary to dioxin pollution.

ACT PULP MILL TV SCHEDULE

**WED., APRIL 19, 7 P.M.**
- Parkersburg, WVTAP – 15
- Wheeling, WTRF – 7

**THURS., APRIL 20, 7 P.M.**
- Clarksburg, WDTV – 5

**THURS., APRIL 20, 7 P.M.**
- Oak Hill, WOAY – 4
- Huntington, WOWK – 13
- Charleston, WCHS – 8

Mill supporters were clearly advocating to change West Virginia water standards to accommodate the new mill.

ACT pointed out the result would have been a disaster in the 1992 and 1993 Cancer Creek fight.

“These documents prove would be more polluted and for no reason other than to save the pulp mill owners money.”

In an effort to reach even more people, ACT is again airing its video “Pulp Fiction/ Poison Promises” (see schedule above). The program includes a new studio discussion hosted by former State Department spokesman Hodding Carter will be included.

“We have always been in support of the jobs a new mill could provide but we think there are other issues the public should be aware of,” said ACT Director Steve White.

White cited the fact mill owners and state officials will not even discuss the two issues ACT continues to raise — hiring local people to build and operate the mill and building it with state-of-the-art technology that doesn’t create dioxin.

“We will continue to air this show until we feel our message has been heard,” he said.

“The public needs to know this new information on taxes, jobs and secret deals.”

ACT has commissioned a study of the economic impact the mill will have.

The study will look at the difference to the state economy between hiring local people at local wages and importing workers at low wages.

White said he hopes ACT members who may have missed the show the first time will be sure to watch it, and all members will urge their friends and family to watch as well.

Discrimination Suit Against Hampton Inn Adds Eight

**Continued from page 1**

Corp. of Memphis, Tenn. charging numerous unfair labor practices.

This came after 36 union construction workers filed complaints with the NLRB charging they were passed over for jobs because of their union affiliation.

Just last month eight members of Plumbers & Fitters Local 625 were added as well.

“We waited until we could show a plumber was hired on the job who applied after we did to file our claim,” said T.L. Ranson, Business Manager for Local 625.

According to Bill Thomas, ACT’s industrial representative, the NLRB is sending questionnaires to all the people who applied for jobs on the project and were included in the complaint.

“I think the questionnaire is to let the Social Security Administration use wage information so they can determine the amount of back pay these people are entitled to,” Thomas said.

Thomas said about 60 union members applied for jobs at the site.

However, the NLRB refused to process some of the claims either because they couldn’t get in touch with the workers or because the NLRB felt some workers wouldn’t have taken a job if offered one.

Thomas is very optimistic because the NLRB has agreed with the union claims and is now acting as legal council for the workers.

“I think we have a considerable amount of evidence that shows these contractors had no intentions of hiring even one union member,” he said.

Besides Plumbers & Fitters Local 625 the case involves members of Operating Engineers 132, Iron Workers 301, Carpenters 1207, and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers 466. All except the electricians are ACT members.

The NLRB hearing date is set for July 27.