

# LL839 Machinists Matters Insert



3917 E MacArthur Rd.  
Wichita, KS. 67210

A Publication for "The Fighting Machinists" Representing the Workers of Spirit AeroSystems

Vol. 6 Number 1

www.ll839.org

www.goiam.org

January 2012



## President's Corner

January 2012

By Kathy Petersen

As we all know, Boeing announced that it would be closing its Wichita plant by the end of

2013. Boeing will be moving its future aircraft maintenance, modification and support work to its facility in San Antonio (a non-union plant), and its engineering work will be placed at the Boeing facility in Oklahoma City (also a non-union plant). Boeing cited the need to cut costs amid a tightening U.S. defense budget as a reason for leaving Wichita. Local politicians are outraged at Boeing's "betrayal" and, I'm sure, feel like suckers after granting Boeing millions of dollars in tax relief and incentives all these years. Of course, Wichita Eagle "Opinion Line" contributors wasted no time in blaming the greedy union workers for Boeing's decision. I couldn't find the figures for Boeing's profits in 2011, but according to the website "Stock Analysis on Net," Boeing's gross profit margin, operating profit margin, and net profit margin all improved in 2010, exceeding 2008 and 2009 levels. Boeing's overall defense business has about 64,000 workers, and it doesn't seem logical that paying reasonable union wages to its 1,000 or so Wichita employees would bring the company to its knees. (Not all of the 2100 Wichita employees are union represented). So, I'd guess there were other factors at work in Boeing's decision to leave town. (We all knew that anyway.)

What is troubling to me about this situation is how quickly the media and the citizens of Wichita jump on the anti-union bandwagon whenever there is any bad news in the air-

craft industry. It confounds me that people think there is something wrong with corporations paying their employees a decent living wage. There seems to be much more consternation in the public over union jobs than over CEOs paying themselves huge bonuses. Why do we think that it is perfectly fine for the rich to keep getting richer, but it is terrible for the middle class to earn enough money to buy a home, a car, and put aside money to send their kids to college?

**Ironically, a few days after Boeing's announcement, I heard a radio program with a discus-**



sion by Michael Daisey about cheap human labor in China. The conversation centered around the Foxconn manufacturing plants in Shenzhen China. One plant has 100,000 workers and another has 200,000 workers. They have another plant in Dongguan, and two more mega-factories in Hunan and Province. Foxconn is the world's largest manufacturer and makes products for Apple, Hewlett-Packard, Nokia and Dell (among others). Daisey visited Foxconn and talked to several workers who were 12 & 13 years old. He wit-

nessed first-hand the massive production lines where people work "endlessly." Workers are never rotated on the lines and many of them suffer with swollen and deformed hands caused by the disintegration of joints in their hands and wrists due to repetitive movement work. There is no such thing as an 8-hour day at Foxconn; it is not uncommon for employees to work 12, 16, 24 and occasionally even 34 hour shifts. Workers are paid about \$294 per month. Basically, according to Daisey, what Foxconn does is work people to death and then discard them when they are of no more use.

**To the union hating people in Wichita, I'd like to ask:** Is this what you want to happen here? American workers formed unions and fought for decades to overturn all the inhumane working conditions described above. Do we really want to return to these horrible labor practices so that the big corporations can pay their shareholders higher dividends and give even bigger bonuses to their CEOs? Anti-union people, can you provide for your family if you are only making minimum wage and have no benefits? What happens if you become ill and are unable to work?

**In China there are "puppet" unions that are supported by companies such as Foxconn and by the Chinese government.** Workers who try to form real unions are imprisoned.

In America the fight continues against the union-busting politicians who are trying to return America to the good old days of child labor, unpaid overtime, no benefits and a weak middle class. We can't allow that to happen.

Thank you to all Spirit employees who are union members. If you are not a union member, please consider joining. Only by increasing our membership will we strengthen the union. And only a strong union will be able to fight the rising tide of anti-union forces in this country.

## Christmas Cash Drawing

By: Stan Chapman



The Community Service committee would like to thank all of you who purchased raffle tickets for the Christmas drawing. Congratulations to the lucky winners: Chad Ahlers won 4th place and \$300.00. Third place winnings (\$500) were split between the District 70 Angel Tree program and LL839 Community Service Committee. Second place winnings in the amount of \$700 went to Jim Elliot. The Grand Prize of \$1000.00 was won by Brenda Leiber.

We also would like to thank the kids that helped by drawing the winning tickets. Justice Phillips, Tyreece Phillips, Tianna Phillips and Ronnie Fisher, who are all grandchildren of shop steward Helen Dean-Wynne.

Thank you again for participating in the Monthly Drawings as the money collected goes to help our members in need and our community it's you that make it possible.

The Community Service Committee Would Like To Wish You All A Happy New Year!!!

## Local Lodge 839 Community Service Committee Gives Back

By Jarrod Lehman

Our Local Lodge Community Service Committee received a letter from Bessie Black, a retired Cessna member, explaining how her Senior Center in Bentley Kansas was in need of a television. The one they had was small, old, and didn't always work properly. Brother Stan Chapman went to Bentley on a Saturday morning to visit with Bessie. After touring the facility, Stan brought his report back to the Committee, and we decided this was something we would be proud to help out with.



The Committee purchased a 40-inch television that could be mounted on the wall. Members of the Community Service Committee went the following Saturday to deliver the television and install it. We also hooked up their DVD player and surround sound, so they could "rock out" on their favorite tunes.

Bessie was incredibly happy to receive the television, but the men were overjoyed knowing they would be able to watch the upcoming Super Bowl game on a big screen T.V. Bessie said we were the best Santa Clause's ever, and couldn't wait to start telling everyone using the center what her Union brothers and Sisters at Local Lodge 839 had done for them! Merry Christmas!



**International Association of Machinists**

**and Aerospace Workers**

**Local Lodge 839**

**3917 E. MacArthur Rd.**

**Wichita, Kansas 67210**

**Phone: (316) 524-1090**

**Fax: (316) 529-1277**

**AEROSPACE**



**Jobs · Security · Prosperity**

**The Fighting Machinists**

**www.ll839.org**

**Monthly Union Meetings**

**2nd Saturday of the Month**

**Executive Board meets at 8:00 AM**

**Regular Meeting at 10:00 AM**

**President - Kathy Petersen**

**Vice President - Jarrod Lehman**

**Recording Secretary - Larry Stafford**

**Treasurer - Joni Pierce**

**Conductor/Sentinel - Craig Dunbar**

**Trustees - Susan Hiebert, Stan Chapman**

**Christopher Phillips**

**Communicator - Dennis Williams**

**Educator - Roger Stamback**

**1st Shift In-Plant Rep. - David Eagle**

**2nd Shift In-Plant Rep. - Howard "HoJo" Johnson**

**Editor - Jarrod Lehman**

We are the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. We belong to Local Lodge 839 of District 70 in Wichita Kansas. We represent the Fighting Machinists of Spirit AeroSystems. We work to give our members a voice on the job. Visit our website often at [www.ll839.org](http://www.ll839.org) for helpful and timely information.

If you have any questions, contact one of your In-Plant Representatives at 524-1090.

If you have any articles you want published, e-mail the Editor at [jlehman@ll839.org](mailto:jlehman@ll839.org).

The opinions expressed in any articles are the opinions of that author not the representatives of LL839

**All Content © of IAM Local Lodge 839 2005-2012, All Rights Reserved**