

NEWSLETTER –APRIL 7, 2009

“Trouble is only opportunity in work clothes.”

It's the beginning of a new month and time here at Local 709. Nominations were held at this month's meeting for the offices of Vice-President and Business Manager. Nominees for Vice-President are Kathy Reyes and Todd Golden. Nominees for Business Manager were myself, Michael Huerta. We will be holding a Special Called Meeting for the Election for the Office of Vice-President on Saturday, May 2nd, 2009 from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the hall. More information below. Good luck to both candidates.

I would like to thank the membership of Local 709 for showing me their support in taking over the day to day business of the Local and by electing me, via white ballot, as your new Business Manager. I plan on working hard to continue earning your support and I will show you just how hard I can work for the betterment of the Local and its members. We will continue on the path set by the previous Business Manager, Sal Chiaravalloti, and beyond. And remember, my door is always open if anyone should have a question or concern, to please stop on by to see me. I would be happy to discuss the matter. Again, thank you to all.

Now on to the important things. The Pension Plan Trustees met in mid-March to discuss how to stop the bleeding from the Fund and they have come up with a plan. The trustees have decided to recognize all of last year's investment losses rather than allowing the losses to be recognized over the next few years as is customary. This decision to face all of last year's losses now will require them to report the plan as being in the 'Red Zone' this year rather than reporting the 'Yellow Zone' this year and then likely 'Red Zone' next year when more of last year's investment losses are recognized. Being 'Red Zone' this year will require all of the following changes:

Contribution Rates:

Beginning July 1st, 2009; the Pension Plan will require an additional \$1.40 per hour contribution (from \$3.30 to \$4.70); \$0.40 of the contribution will come from the increase which began on January 1st, 2009 to the Health & Welfare Plan (from \$8.10 to \$7.70) and the remaining \$1.00 shall come from the wage package, which we will discuss from where at the Special Called Meeting on May 4th, 2009.

On January 1st, 2010; the Pension Plan will require an additional \$0.50 per hour contribution (from \$4.70 to \$5.20). Per our contract, beginning January 1st, 2010 we have allocated \$0.10 to Pension and \$0.50 to Health & Welfare, so the allocations will be switched to \$0.50 to Pension and \$0.10 to Health & Welfare (from \$7.70 to \$7.80).

From then on, each January 1st, the plan contribution rate shall increase by a min. \$0.15 per hr. (A Yellow Rating would have required even greater contribution increases because the Early Retirement changes described below would not be allowed under the 'Yellow Zone'.)

Pension Credits:

Future Pension credits shall remain at the current rate of \$110.00 per year of service. (A Yellow Zone Rating would have only allowed a change to this by reducing the amount of all future credits possibly to as little as \$0.)

Early Retirement:

The current Early Retirement reduction rate is 1% per year prior to the age of 61 or 1/12% per month prior to the age of 61 (Max.6%). Effective January 1st, 2010; the reduction rate will increase to 2% per year prior to the age of 61 or 1/6% per month prior to the age of 61 (Max.12%). (A Yellow Rating would not have allowed for any change.)

Vested & Terminated:

For those that have vested into the pension plan but are either no longer working in the industry or are not having any contributions reported on their behalf shall receive the full early retirement reduction rate of about 6% per year prior to the age of 65 or 1/2% per month prior to the age of 65 (Max.60%)

A Special Called Meeting for the Election for the Office of Vice President will be held on Saturday, May 2, 2009 at the Local 709 James J. Duffy III Meeting Hall at 12140 Rivera Road, Whittier, CA 90606. The Polls will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. In the event of a tie, there will be a Run-off Election held on Saturday, May 23, 2009. It too will have the Polls open from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Eligibility to vote at a Local Union election is stated in Sec. 124: "No member shall vote at any election of any description unless he or she has been a member in good standing in the Local Union where the vote is being taken for a period of one (1) year immediately prior to the date of election. Any member who owes or has paid a Re-instatement Fee within a period of one (1) year immediately prior to the date of election shall not be eligible to vote in any Local Union election." I hope to see all eligible members out to vote.

A Special Called Meeting to Discuss the Increase to the Hourly Contribution Rate for the Pension Plan will be held on May 4, 2009 at the Local 709 James J. Duffy III Meeting Hall at 12140 Rivera Road, Whittier, CA 90606. We will only discuss where to take the additional \$1.00 per hour contribution from. A vote will be taken at the next meeting on June 1, 2009, which will also be a Special Called Meeting.

Dodger Game Outing will be Friday, June 5th, 2009 versus the World Champion Philadelphia Phillies. Game time is 7:10 pm and the cost per ticket is \$10 each, which includes all the Dodger dogs, nachos and beverages you can eat and drink. How can you lose? There are a limited number of tickets available with a limit of 20, so there will be **NO** reserving of tickets. Tickets are first come, first served, and are now available at the hall.

Retirees Golf Tournament will be held on Thursday, April 23, 2009 at the Royal Vista Country Club in Walnut. If you are interested in a day of camaraderie and all-around fun, please call the hall for a registration form or give one of the Retiree Committee Members a call: Jim Duffy (626) 331-7946; Rick Guyer (626) 810-8349; Tom Collister (909) 861-4915; or Dan Calnan (626) 962-5987. Hurry, because the deadline for registration is Monday, April 13th, 2009.

Welding Certification Classes are still available for journeymen and apprentices who are on the out of work list. They are being offered through Local 250 and PIPE. If you are interested, please contact Robin Schledorn or John Holmes at Local 709 (562) 907-7622 and they will set it up for you.

TWIC (Transportation Workers Identification Credential) will soon be required on many government jobs. For those members on the out of work list, Local 709 will subsidize your application fee if you meet the TWIC eligibility requirements. Please call me for more information.

Reminder for those that have Automatic Payment of Monthly Base Dues through Union Yes Federal Credit Union. Please be advised that your account must have a minimum balance, at the beginning of each month, equal to that of \$25 plus the amount which you have requested to be paid to Local 709. If not, no payment will be sent to Local 709 and that month's dues will not be paid. Your authorization of payment is for a set amount only each month. You will not receive a notice either from the Credit Union nor Local 709 regarding there being no dues payment. Please contact Maribel or Judy to check on your current charges due.

Another Reminder to always keep your contact information current. If we do not have your correct and current contact information, then we will be unable to contact you should there be a need. This means either through mailings or phone calls. Just because you put a new phone number in the out-of-work book, this does not mean that the computers have been updated. You must notify Maribel or Judy of all changes immediately.

Irwindale Speedway vouchers are now available. Vouchers are very limited and are on a first come, first served basis with a limit of only two (2) per member. Please see Maribel or Judy at the hall.

Anglers interested in a day of Sport fishing, should contact Local 709 member Robin Hillis at (562) 531-8636 or (562) 818-4628.

Welcome aboard to a New Contractor - SFM Constructors, Inc. We wish them the best and look forward to a long working relationship.

We are Saddened to Report the passing of Lifetime Members Brother James Stewart, Brother Bob Hunsaker and Brother William Faulkner. Our thoughts and prayers go out to their families and friends during this time of loss. They will be missed.

“It is not the situation. It is your reaction to the situation.”

Fraternally yours,



Michael P. Huerta
Business Manager/Financial Secretary

Dates to Remember:

April 23, 2009 – Retiree Golf Tournament

April 12, 2009 – Happy Easter

May 1, 2009 – Monthly Base Dues are Due and Payable

May 2, 2009 – Polls Open for Special Election of Vice President

May 4, 2009 – Union Meeting

May 7-10, 2009 – California State Pipe Trades Convention, Palm Springs

May 23, 2009 –Run-off Election (If Needed)

May 25, 2009 – Memorial Day Holiday (Double-time rate)

May 27, 2009 – Retiree Potluck / Bingo

Reminder Check payable to: LOCAL 709

Check/Money Order No. _____

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| Journeyman \$26; Apprentice \$26; Residential \$24; Retired (65 B4 12/31/01) \$15; Retired (65 B4 12/31/06) \$19; Retired (All Other) \$20 Mail to: 12140 Rivera Road., Whittier, CA 90606 Amount \$ _____ | |
| Month(s) Paying: | |
| Initiation Due: | |
| Death Assessment: | \$21 for 2008 |
| Reinstatement Fee: | |

The Newsletter is also available online at www.sprinklerfitters709.org