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BCTGM *News*

VOLUME 8
NUMBER 2

WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY



the PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SETTING THE COURSE FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

In keeping with the requirements of our International Constitution, the BCTGM will convene the 37th Constitutional Convention July 19-25, 2006 in Las Vegas,

Nevada. As the portion of the Constitution cited below clearly demonstrates, the Convention is the most significant event in the governance of our Union.

I am pleased to report that Convention preparations are moving forward very efficiently as the International Officers and staff attend to the multitude of details and activities necessary for a successful Convention. We are expecting nearly 500 delegates and alternates to be in attendance.

We have invited a number of interesting guest speakers who will address the Convention on a wide range of issues important to the delegates and the brothers and sisters they will be representing from their respective local unions. Among the issues to be covered by the convention are political action, organizing and collective bargaining.

One of the most important activities undertaken by the Convention is the review and vote on the resolutions that are submitted by the General Executive Board and local unions for Convention consideration. The resolutions are forwarded to the Committee on Resolutions which carefully weighs the merits of each resolution to determine whether or not the resolution advances the interests of the general membership and the organization and is in keeping with the letter and spirit of the BCTGM Constitution.

As we have done for the past several Conventions, this year we host a first-time delegates' breakfast. We expect that as many as half of the delegates will be attending their first BCTGM Convention. Held the morning of the opening session, this event provides these delegates with an opportunity to meet their Regional Vice Presidents and Representatives. The breakfast also provides delegates with a better understanding of the Convention agenda and what to expect.

Reflecting back on my first Convention as a local union delegate, I know that this breakfast helps eliminate any uncertainty first-time delegates may have and makes the week a much more rewarding and enjoyable experience. I always look forward to interacting with our first-time delegates at this breakfast and find it an enthusiastic way to kick off the Convention activities.

We will be holding our Convention as the labor movement begins to shift into high gear for the critical 2006 elections in November. I am very pleased that AFL-CIO President John Sweeney will be addressing our Convention. He will be providing an overview of the Labor 2006 political program; a program designed to ultimately hold the reckless

political leadership of this country accountable for what it's done to working families for the nearly five and a half harsh years they have been in power.

Changing the political leadership of our nation is absolutely imperative if working men and women are to realize an improvement in their standard of living and that of their children and grandchildren. The BCTGM will be at the forefront of this political change.

Because there is so much at stake for working families in the 2006 elections, we will utilize our Convention as a springboard for the most effective, comprehensive political action program ever undertaken by the BCTGM. Toward that end, I will be calling on the delegates to be committed political action advocates within their local unions. I also will ask them to take the lead in coordinating with state labor federations and local labor councils to facilitate the AFL-CIO's Labor 2006 program.

Our Conventions are always exciting and energizing. They are a tribute to the true democratic traditions of the BCTGM and reaffirm our dedication to the principles upon which our great Union was founded 120 years ago.

I anticipate a highly successful and productive Convention; one that will keep our Union on the best course to serve our members, advance the cause of dignity, justice and respect in the workplace and help improve the quality of life in the United States and Canada.

Frank Hurt
BCTGM International President

"All of the sovereign power, including the legislative, executive, administrative and judicial, of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union shall be vested in its Convention when in session."

Article III, Section 1, BCTGM Constitution



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‘Right to Organize’ is Vital: Hurt Tells Congressman Miller

BCTGM International President Frank Hurt met with U.S. Representative George Miller (D-Calif.) on February 16 to discuss the importance of the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) to the BCTGM.

The EFCA was introduced as bipartisan legislation in the 109th Congress on April 19, 2005 by Senators Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Arlen Specter (R-Pa.) and Representatives Miller and Peter King (R-N.Y.). The act would strengthen protections for workers’ freedom to choose by requiring employers to recognize a union after a majority of workers signs cards authorizing union representation. It also would provide for mediation and arbitration of first-contract disputes and authorize stronger penalties for violation of the law when workers seek to form a union.

“I know first-hand how important it is for workers to be able to freely form unions to secure a decent standard of living, affordable health insurance and safe workplaces. For our democracy to work, workers must have a voice in our workplaces, communities and in our nation’s civic and political life,” Hurt told Miller.

Some 57 million U.S. workers say they would join a union if they could. But when workers try to gain a union voice on the job, employers respond with intimidation, harassment and retaliation. And our labor laws are too weak to stop them.

According to Congressman



BCTGM Intl. Pres. Frank Hurt (right) explains the importance of the EFCA to U.S. Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.)

Miller, the nation’s current laws must be changed. “Under current law, even if you’re fortunate enough to win a union election in your workplace, the employer can drag out the negotiation of a first contract for months—even years. So the worker essentially wins nothing with that election,” Miller explained.

“With this legislation, if an employer and a union are engaged in bargaining for their first contract and are unable to reach agreement within 90 days, either party may refer the dispute to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service for mediation. If the FMCS has been unable to bring the parties to agreement after 30 days of mediation, the dispute will be referred

to arbitration and the results of the arbitration shall be binding on the parties for two years,” detailed Miller.

Hurt asked Miller how the EFCA would help workers like those at Consolidated Biscuit Co. in McComb, Ohio, who have been trying to win a voice at work with the BCTGM for more than three years.

“This legislation would take away the mismatch between the willingness of Consolidated to violate the law, their financial resources to intimidate the workers and put them on equal footing with the workers,” Miller stated.

In conclusion, Hurt asked Miller what BCTGM members could do at the local level to help get the EFCA passed into law.

“Union members, local unions and workers who want a union at their workplace have got to go and insist on appointments with their members of Congress. You have a right to that appointment; you have a right to that meeting,” Miller said.

“Members of Congress must know that there’s a voice at home that cares about this issue. You’ve got to button-hole that member of Congress and let him or her know: I live where you represent, my family lives here, and this is important to us!,” Miller concluded.

PROTECT WORKERS NOW



Within just a few weeks' time at the start of 2006, the disasters at the Sago mine and five other mines claimed the lives of 18 miners. These tragedies focused the nation's attention on the dangers faced by workers and the weaknesses in job safety protections. But the Sago disaster was not an isolated event. Before this year is over, thousands more workers will be killed on the job and millions will be injured or diseased.

More than three decades ago, Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) and the Mine Safety and Health Act (MSHA), promising every worker the right to a safe job. Unions and our allies have fought hard to make that promise a reality, winning protections that have saved hundreds of thousand of lives. But the fight for safe jobs has gotten harder as corporate interests, joined by the Bush administration and conservative Republicans, have moved to roll back and weaken protections.

Since 2001 the administration has blocked or withdrawn dozens of important safety rules, including a number of measures that may have prevented the recent mine tragedies. Voluntary compliance has been favored over issuing new protective standards and enforcement. Industry officials have been put in charge of government safety programs.

In Congress, Republican leaders have ignored calls to strengthen the mine safety law, and instead are pushing legislation that would gut OSHA enforcement. And many employers, in a race to the bottom in a global economy, are looking to cut wages and benefits and loosen protections. With fewer and fewer workers having the protection of a union, more workers are afraid to speak out and raise job safety concerns, fearing retaliation and firing.

On April 28, the BCTGM joins the unions of the AFL-CIO in observance of Workers Memorial Day to remember those who have suffered and died on the job and to renew the fight for safe workplaces. We will fight to improve the mine safety law and protections for all workers. We will fight to make workers' issues a priority and to keep and create good jobs in this country. We will fight for the freedom of workers to form unions and, through their unions, to speak out and bargain for safe jobs, respect and a better future. We will keep fighting until the promise of safe jobs for all workers is a reality.

Mourn for the Dead— Fight for the Living

OBSERVE WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY: APRIL 28

Decades of struggle by workers and their unions have significantly improved working conditions. But the fight to protect workers must continue. We must demand strong enforcement of job safety laws, defend the gains we have won and push forward to address problems that remain.

- Companies that repeatedly break job safety laws, killing workers, face only weak penalties.
- Workplace standards are out of date and inadequate.
- Many long-recognized hazards have not been addressed, and new workplace hazards that emerge get no attention.
- Ergonomic hazards still cripple and injure more workers than any other workplace hazard.
- Immigrant workers are being killed on the job in record numbers.
- Millions of workers have no protections under the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

What You Can Do on Workers Memorial Day

- Hold a candlelight vigil, memorial service or moment of silence to remember those who have died on the job and to highlight job safety problems in your community and at your workplace.
- Organize a rally to highlight the job safety and health problems in your community or at your workplace and to show how the union is fighting to improve protections.
- Create memorials at workplaces or in communities where workers have been killed on the job.
- Distribute workplace fliers and organize a call-in to congressional representatives during lunch times or break times. Tell your members of Congress to support stronger mine safety and OSHA protections. Tell them to oppose efforts to weaken the OSHA law.
- Hold a public meeting with members of Congress in their home districts. Bring injured workers and family members who can talk firsthand about the need for strong safety and health protections. Invite local religious leaders and other allies to participate in the meeting.

Health & Safety Challenges *in 2006*

OSHA “DEFORM” LEGISLATION—Senator Enzi (R-WY) has introduced legislation that would cut the heart of OSHA enforcement. S.2065—the Occupational Safety Partnership Act—allows employers to self certify compliance through third party audits, and exempts these companies from OSHA penalties. A companion bill, S. 2066—the Occupational Safety Fairness Act—includes four bad OSHA bills passed earlier by the House, including a measure to award attorneys fees to all “small” employers who prevail in OSHA enforcement cases, and other provisions that would make it difficult if not impossible for OSHA to issue citations for job safety violations. On top of this, S. 2066 authorizes OSHA to cite and penalize workers for failing to wear personal protective equipment. There is nothing in these bills to strengthen job safety protections. In contrast, Senator Kennedy (D-MA) and Rep. Owens (D-NY) have introduced legislation (S. 944, H.R. 2004)—Protecting America’s Workers Act—to strengthen OSHA by expanding coverage to uncovered workers, enhancing whistleblower protections and increasing penalties for serious and willful violations.

Employer Voluntary Programs Favored over Enforcement—The Administration has made expanding voluntary programs and outreach to employers a priority. President Bush’s OSHA has set up partnerships and alliances with dozens of employers, largely excluding unions. At both OSHA and MSHA, industry officials have been appointed to top positions, increasing the employer-friendly orientation and policies of these agencies.

No New Workplace Safety and Health Rules—The Bush Administration killed dozens of worker protection measures under development at OSHA and MSHA, including rules on cancer causing substances, reactive chemicals, infectious diseases such as TB, mine rescue teams and self-contained, self-rescue devices. They have even refused to issue a rule requiring employers to pay for personal protective equipment, particularly important for immigrant and low-wage workers. The Bush Administration has the worst record on safety rules in OSHA’s entire history, issuing no new significant rules during its first term.

Ergonomic Hazards Still a Major Problem—Soon after taking office in 2001, the Bush Administration joined with anti-worker business groups to repeal OSHA’s ergonomics standard. The standard, 10 years in the making, would have required employers to protect workers from the nation’s biggest job safety problem—injuries caused by heavy lifting and repetitive work. The administration’s promised “comprehensive plan” to address ergonomic hazards has turned out to be a sham. In four years, only three voluntary non-enforceable guidelines—for nursing homes, retail grocery and poultry—have been issued, with no additional guidelines planned. Meanwhile, musculoskeletal disorders remain a major job safety problem, responsible for one-third of all workplace injuries.

Maintaining OSHA, MSHA and NIOSH Funding—Since President Bush took office, maintaining adequate funding for the federal job safety programs has been a struggle, with repeated attempts to slash funding. Since FY 2001, the OSHA budget has been cut three percent and the MSHA coal enforcement budget cut 10 percent in real dollar terms and hundreds of enforcement positions eliminated at both agencies. The FY 2007 budget request maintains the OSHA and MSHA programs at 2006 levels, but proposes to eliminate OSHA’s worker training program and shift funds instead to employer compliance assistance. For NIOSH, the job safety research agency, a \$4.5 million cut is proposed.

American workers need a strong OSHA and a strong MSHA that put workers, not employers, first and protect safety and health, not corporate interests. We will continue to fight for strong safety and health protections for all workers.

MOTHER'S KITCHEN:



'Baked with Love'

Burlington, N.J.—Vividly painted on the tiled wall of the lunchroom at Mother's Kitchen is a mural that simply states: "Mother's Kitchen—"LeGourmet"—Baked with Love!"

Mother's Kitchen workers—proud members of BCTGM Local 6 (Philadelphia)—produce cheesecakes and a variety of gourmet cakes that gives the company the reputation of creating baked goods as wonderful as those from your Mother's own Kitchen.

All Mother's products are made with care by skillful BCTGM bakers who take great pride in producing the company's award-winning cheesecakes that are sent to restaurants, food service operations and supermarkets throughout the U.S. From their famous "Original Recipe" Cheesecakes to the elegant New York Style Cheesecakes, Mother's Kitchen workers make a vast assortment of the smoothest, creamiest cheesecakes—using fresh, premium ingredients and skilled baking methods.

Local 6 members at Mother's Kitchen also produce a line of luscious gourmet cakes and pies that are truly a work of art. Mother's Kitchen gourmet layer cakes and pies are hand made, hand iced, and hand decorated by the most talented and well trained bakers and decorators in the industry—members of BCTGM Local 6.

Founded in 1971 as a local bakery, Mother's Kitchen is now one of the largest gourmet cheesecake manufacturers in the industry. The workers at the Burlington bakery produce and ship up to 40,000 cheesecakes and 2,500 cakes per day.





Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union

10401 Connecticut Avenue • Kensington, Maryland 20895-3961

CONVENTION CALL

April 1, 2006

TO ALL AFFILIATED LOCAL UNIONS:

GREETINGS:

The International Constitution provides, in Article III, Section 2: "The regular Convention shall be held every four years. It shall convene on such date and in such place as the International President, with the approval of the General Executive Board, shall designate.

"The International Secretary-Treasurer shall issue a Convention Call to all local unions in the third month immediately preceding the convening of the regular Convention.

"The Convention shall not extend beyond ten days of sessions, except by two-thirds vote of the duly accredited delegates."

In accordance with the above, you are hereby notified that the Thirty-Seventh Constitutional Convention of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union will convene in the city of Las Vegas, Nevada beginning at 10:00 a.m., on Wednesday, July 19, 2006 and concluding on Tuesday, July 25, 2006.

QUALIFICATIONS OF DELEGATES

Article III, Section 5 of the International Constitution states that: "Every delegate to the Convention must (1) have been a continuously good-standing, dues-paying member of the International Union and local union the delegate represents for at least two continuous years next prior to election; (2) be provided with properly attested credentials from the local union the delegate represents; (3) have worked at least two years immediately preceding the Convention as a wage earner in any branch of the trades, except for periods of layoff (including layoffs arising from plant shutdowns) and terminations being grieved, not to exceed twelve (12) continuous months, under the jurisdiction of the International Union or as an officer or employee of the International Union or a local union; (4) be able to show such number of Union labels as the General Executive Board may require.

(The General Executive Board has established the requirement of showing three (3) union labels.)

Exempted from the requirements of (1) and (3) above shall be delegates whose local unions have not been in existence for two years, provided that the continuously good-standing, dues-paying and wage-earning period of such delegates are not less than six months.

Article III, Section 4 provides:

"Each local union may elect an alternate delegate at the same time the regular delegates are elected. Alternates must have the same qualifications as delegates. In the event of the inability of any delegate to attend the Convention because of an emergency, the alternate may replace the delegate, provided that the local union notifies the International Secretary-Treasurer of the change."

ELECTION OF DELEGATES

The election of delegates is subject to provisions of the International Constitution and the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 (Landrum-Griffin Law).

REPRESENTATION OF DELEGATES

The International Constitution in Article III, Section 4, provides: "Local unions in good-standing including those which have been organized under the jurisdiction of the International Union six (6) months previous to the Convention shall be entitled to representation. Local unions with a monthly average International per capita tax on its dues-paying membership of

less than 251 shall be entitled to one (1) delegate
from 251 to 500 to two (2) delegates;
from 501 to 750 to three (3) delegates;
from 751 to 1,000 to four (4) delegates;
from 1,001 to 1,400 to five (5) delegates;
from 1,401 to 1,800 to six (6) delegates;
from 1,801 to 2,200 to seven (7) delegates;
from 2,201 to 2,600 to eight (8) delegates;
from 2,601 to 3,000 to nine (9) delegates;
over 3,001 to ten (10) delegates;

but in no case shall a local union be entitled to more than ten (10) delegates. Any two or three locals having less than one hundred members each located within an area of 250 miles may combine in the selection of a delegate. No other local unions may combine in the selection of a delegate and no delegate shall represent more than three such local unions.

“The number of members of a union shall be the average monthly per capita tax that it has paid to the International Union on its dues-paying membership for twelve (12) months inclusive of the fourth month (March) previous to the Convention, as certified by the International Secretary-Treasurer to the Credentials Committee.

“Delegates representing up to twenty-five (25) members shall be entitled to one vote, and to one additional vote for each additional twenty-five members or major fraction thereof they represent. The number of votes of local unions which are represented by more than one delegate shall be equally divided to the nearest whole number among all their delegates.”

CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES

Article III, Section 6 provides: “At least forty (40) days prior to the opening of the Convention, duplicates of credentials on blanks furnished by the International Secretary-Treasurer from the authorized local union officer shall be received by the International Secretary-Treasurer, or shall be postmarked not later than forty-five (45) days prior to the opening of the Convention, in an envelope properly addressed to the International Secretary-Treasurer.

“The International Secretary-Treasurer shall cause to be published in the official journal of the International Union, in the last issue before the Convention, but not less than fifteen (15) days prior to the convening of the Convention, a list of all the delegates-elect and the local union each delegate represents.

“Delegates to the Convention shall present the original credentials bearing the seal of the local union and signatures of the authorized officers of their respective locals to the Committee on Credentials. Protests against the delegates must be in written affidavit form, stating the specific grounds for protest and signed and sworn to by the party objecting to the seating of the delegate. These affidavits must be transmitted by registered or certified mail to the International Secretary-Treasurer (with a copy to the local union) and the envelope, properly addressed to the International Secretary-Treasurer, must be postmarked at least ten (10) days prior to the convening of the Convention.”

COMPENSATION OF DELEGATES

Article III, Section 7. “The International Union shall pay each delegate in attendance at the regular Convention as compensation \$595 and an amount equal to the cost of regular coach transportation by air from the delegate’s home city to the Convention city and return by direct route, except as negotiated in the BC&T/AFGM merger agreement; provided, however, that such delegates remain in attendance upon the Convention commencing with its first day’s session until its adjournment. Compensation and transportation for special convention shall be set by the General Executive Board.

“Transportation and compensation of protested delegates shall not be furnished unless and until such delegates have been seated as accredited.”

CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS

Article III, Section 10. “All resolutions by local unions to be submitted to the Convention either must be received at International Headquarters at least forty (40) days prior to the opening of the Convention, or must be postmarked in a properly addressed envelope at least forty-five (45) days prior to the opening of the Convention. Each resolution must deal with but one subject matter, be submitted in triplicate and each copy signed only by all delegates-elect, or a majority of the Executive Board.

“Resolutions by the General Executive Board may be introduced at the Convention, provided such resolutions have the approval of a majority of the General Executive Board. All other resolutions may only be introduced with the approval of a two-thirds vote of the Convention.”

Local unions are urged to forward all resolutions as soon as they are formulated in order that they may be printed for distribution to the delegates.

In order to facilitate the printing of resolutions, each resolution must deal with only one subject, be typewritten, and only one side of each page should be used.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Information with reference to hotel accommodations, etc., will be forwarded upon receipt of the delegate’s certified credential.

GENERAL

We hope that your local union will have full representation at the Thirty-Seventh Constitutional Convention of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union, AFL-CIO, CLC, in Las Vegas, Nevada. Your participation is essential in assisting us in setting priorities during the ensuing four years in important activities relative to economic advancement of our membership, political action activities, and the organizing of the unorganized workers in our jurisdiction.

Fraternally yours,



Frank Hurt
International President

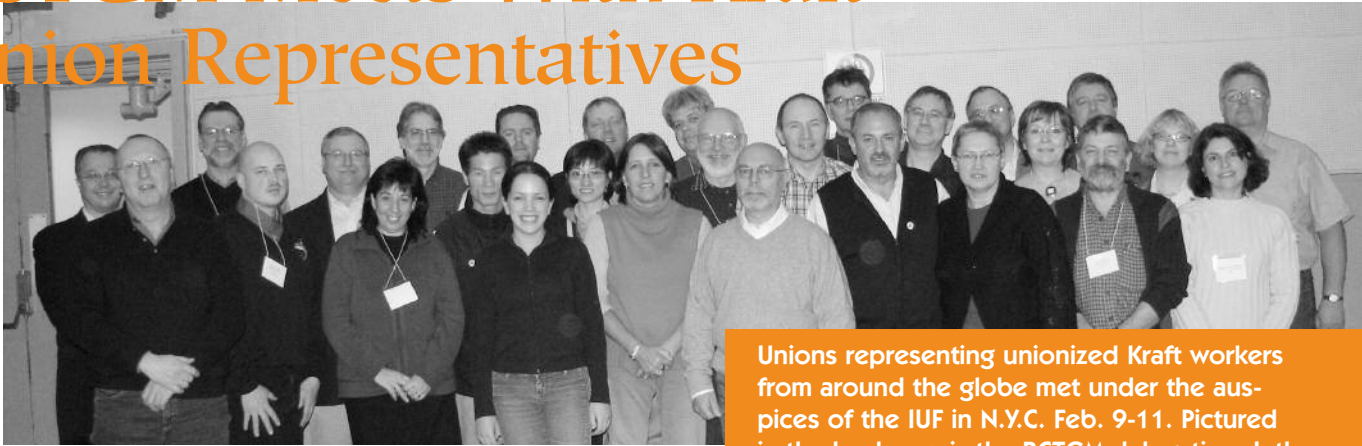


David B. Durkee
International Secretary-Treasurer

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BCTGM Meets With Kraft Union Representatives



Unions representing unionized Kraft workers from around the globe met under the auspices of the IUF in N.Y.C. Feb. 9-11. Pictured in the back row is the BCTGM delegation: Intl. Rep. Jim Condran (far left), Intl. Secy-Treas. David B. Durkee (second from left), Intl. Research & Ed. Dir. Ray Scannell (fourth from left), and Intl. Research Specialist Matthew Clark (fifth from left).

Representatives of Kraft workers from North America, Europe, Latin American, Asia and Africa, including the BCTGM, came together under the auspices of the International Union of Food Workers (IUF), the global federation of unions in the food processing and related industries, in New York on February 9-11.

According to the IUF, the unions attending the three-day session represent the largest number of unionized Kraft workers from around the world. The BCTGM represents more than

was not developing new products or ensuring the value of its branded products, but instead focusing exclusively on cost-cutting.

The worker representatives also expressed concerns about Kraft's human resource policies and practices. While Kraft has been relatively forthcoming about its plans with analysts and the business press, the company's communications with workers and their unions has become less transparent. Information regarding plant closings and the

in Poland," reflected BCTGM International Secretary-Treasurer and Director of Organization, David B. Durkee. "We look forward to working with these unions to ensure that Kraft workers throughout the world are treated with dignity and respect."

The unions agreed to pursue global initiatives of their own at Kraft. Their network of unions will be formalized in a Kraft Working Group under the leadership of the IUF. The Working Group will facilitate a continuing exchange of information and international activity. A smaller Contact Group has been mandated to reach out to Kraft senior global management to discuss the workers' concerns and report back to the Working Group.

"From this point forward our unions will work together to ensure that the workers who produce Kraft's profits are part of its future and benefit from real growth and the improvement in the company's fortunes," said IUF General Secretary Ron Oswald.

"We learned that our experiences in North America are similar to those in other parts of the world, whether it be in South Korea or in Poland."

5,000 Kraft workers in biscuit and cereal facilities in the U.S. and Canada.

The participating unions shared information on the company's restructuring initiatives announced in 2004 and early this year. The union representatives also reviewed Kraft's overall performance and the impact of the cost cutting program on workers and product quality. Reports from union representatives raised concerns that Kraft

effects of other restructuring measures has been selectively withheld. Kraft's responsibility for product quality and labor standards at external contract manufacturers, and its position regarding union representation were also issues of concern.

"We were overwhelmed by the level of participation and learned that our experiences in North America are similar to those in other parts of the world, whether it be in South Korea or

LOCAL 25 AND WHITE LILY REACH EARLY CONTRACT SETTLEMENT

In July 2003, when the BCTGM and White Lily Foods Co. did not reach agreement on a new contract, the company locked workers out and union members conducted a 14-week informational picket outside the plant in Knoxville, Tenn.

This round of contract negotiations produced a much different and positive conclusion. In February, Local 25 reported that negotiators had reached an early contract with White Lily that benefits both sides—months ahead of the June 2 contract expiration date.

“It’s a great ending to a story that started three years ago,” said Local 25 Business Agent David Woods. “It was a hard time back then and nobody won. We were thrilled to work this out.” Woods noted that this contract with White Lily is the local’s first-ever collective bargaining agreement that has been



negotiated and signed well ahead of the expiration date.

The new contract, which was overwhelmingly ratified by the Local 25 members, includes wage and pension increases, maintenance of current health care benefits and flexible overtime language.

According to Woods, the most significant gain of the agreement was the pension improvements, which will benefit all the White Lily workers—especially those

nearing their retirement.

“This is an outstanding contract,” notes Woods. “The company came to the table ready and willing to work with the union. This agreement is the result of a lot of hard work and a positive attitude on both sides. Neither side wanted a repeat of the struggle we went through in 2003 so the fact that we were able to reach a settlement ahead of the contract

expiration date benefits not only our members—but White Lily as well. We’re very proud of this,” concludes Woods.

Reflecting back on the 2003 lockout of White Lily workers, International Vice President Tony Johnson notes, “Once again I’d like to extend my gratitude to the locals and union volunteers from across this nation that helped these workers in their fight for a new contract. This is what the BCTGM is all about.”



BCTGM Local 25 members gather once every year to celebrate their union contract that ended the 14-week lockout.

Union advantage **grew** in 2005

The number of American workers who belong to unions rose by 213,000 in 2005, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), halting erosion that has been going on for decades.

“In a political climate that’s hostile to workers’ rights, these numbers illustrate the extraordinary will of workers to gain a voice on the job despite enormous obstacles,” said AFL-CIO President John Sweeney.

As union membership grew, so did the union advantage in wages: A typical union worker made \$179 a week more in 2005 than a non-union worker did, a gap that widened by \$10.

The median weekly income of full-time union workers was \$801 in 2005, BLS says—28.8 percent higher than the \$622 median for non-union workers. Median means half the workers make more, half make less.

The advantage of working union is proportionately even larger

for female, Latino and African-American workers, whose pay traditionally trails white men.

The union advantage translates into more than \$9,300 a year in extra pay for union households. That is on top of the huge union advantage in workplace benefits.

Union members continue to have dramatically better workplace benefits than non-union workers including health insurance, real pension plans, paid vacations and holidays. Fewer than half of non-union workers in the private sector had health insurance in 2005, according to the BLS, however, 83 percent of union workers had it. All of this is on top of benefits that the government doesn’t track, everything from scheduling and seniority rights to overtime protections and contract guarantees against unjust firings or discipline.

The bottom line: **Union members live better!**

Workers participating in retirement and health-care benefit plans

Benefit	Union	Nonunion
Retirement Plan	85%	46%
Defined Benefit	72%	15%
Defined Contribution	43%	41%
Medical Insurance	83%	49%
Single Coverage		
No employee contribution	43%	21%
Employee share of premium	10%	19%
Employee monthly cost (avg.)	\$55.71	\$70.80
Family Coverage		
No employee contribution	35%	8%
Employee share of premium	16%	32%
Employee monthly cost (avg.)	\$198.19	\$282.98
Dental Insurance	67%	33%
Vision Insurance	51%	19%
Prescription drug coverage	77%	44%

Workers with access to benefits

Paid Sick Leave	61%	58%
Paid Holidays	87%	75%
Average number per year	10	8
Paid Vacations	86%	77%
Paid Jury Duty	83%	68%
Paid Funeral Leave	82%	66%
Life Insurance	65%	50%
Short-Term Disability	67%	37%
Long-Term Disability	30%	30%
Child-Care Assistance	18%	14%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics; “National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in Private Industry in the United States, 2005.”

Cleveland Prepares for 2006 Union Industries Show

The 2006 Union Industries Show, “America at Work 2006”—the greatest-ever exposition of union-made, American-made goods and services—opens May 5–7 at the Cleveland I-X Center.

Visitors to the AFL-CIO’s 2006 America at Work Show will see and hear how the nation’s union workers produce the items that benefit the lives of Americans. Admission is free.

The BCTGM will be among hundreds of exhibits covering more than 400,000 square feet of floor space where visitors will get a close-up look at the wide range of union occupations and the skills and training required to perform those jobs. Show-goers can chat with skilled workers in every craft and trade-along with the men and women who serve as instructors in dozens of union apprenticeship and training programs.

The BCTGM’s exhibit at the 68th Annual America at Work Show will feature union cake decorators and hundreds of delectable union-made treats from more than 50 BCTGM-contracted companies.

Crowds will be drawn by the promise of more than \$1 million in giveaways, including a top-of-the-line Harley Davidson motorcycle; new cars from Ford and Daimler-Chrysler; bags filled with BCTGM-made treats, tools household goods and refrigerators, freezers, washers and dryers.

“We invite people can see all the fine products and services that are still made in the U.S. by men and women earning excellent wages and benefits, with their rights and dignity protected by good union contracts,” said Charles Mercer, president of the Union Label and Services Department, AFL-CIO.

For more information on the 2006 America at Work Union Industries Show visit, <http://americatwork2006.com>.

Local 218 Members Ratify Frito-Lay Contract

After five months of intense contract negotiations, 280 BCTGM Local 218 (Kansas City, Mo.) members employed by Frito-Lay in Topeka, Kan. ratified a new three year agreement.

Contract negotiations between the BCTGM and Frito-Lay began in August 2005. "Negotiations were difficult and long—we went on past the contract expiration date," recalls Local 218 Financial Secretary Brad Schmidt. "The committee stuck together and came out of it with a good agreement to present to the membership."

Local 218 members overwhelmingly approved the new pact on January 27. The contract covers Frito-Lay workers in production, sanitation and maintenance departments. Highlights of the agreement include wage increases, and an improved grievance procedure to make the



The BCTGM negotiating committee included (seated, from left) Mike Phillips, L. 218 Fin. Secy. Brad Schmidt, and Mark McCarter; (standing, from left) Candy Phiefer, David Ramirez, Joan Young and

company more accountable, says Schmidt.

"I was truly impressed by this negotiating committee," notes BCTGM International Vice President Jeanne Graham, who assisted in the negotiations. "It was a tough series of meetings,

but the committee knew what the membership wanted and never backed down."

Workers at the Topeka plant manufacture Lay's and Ruffles brand potato chips, and Doritos, Tostitos, Cheetos, and Funyuns brand snack chips.

AFL-CIO Executive Council Sets 2006 Agenda

The AFL-CIO will spend \$40 million on politics in 2006, focusing on up to 15 Senate races, 40 House races and 23 governorships in 21 states.

During the Executive Council meeting, federation President John J. Sweeney noted that "every cent of the political drive will be dedicated to educating and mobilizing our members and advocating working family issues like health care, retirement security and good jobs.

"Not a penny will go to political candidates. And our program will be conducted on a non-partisan basis to elect candidates who stand with and for working families," he declared.

"In the short term, the outcome of these races will determine our success on key issues ranging from right to work for less and prevailing wages to public-sector bargaining and pensions," a federation background fact sheet says. "In the longer term, the outcome of those races will help set the stage for the 2008 presidential election and the redistricting that will occur after the 2010 census."

The federation's 10-point political program includes "adopting quantifiable goals" for unionists' participation, work-

site involvement, voter registration and turnout efforts. It also wants its member unions to each pick a policy or issue to emphasize to its members.

And its Candidate Accountability Program will demand that politicians "take specific actions on issues affiliates select to improve and win contracts for current and future members."

The Executive Council also announced an ambitious plan to escalate the Voice@Work campaign in 2006. The Voice@Work campaign will intensify the fight to enact the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) in the current Congress. The campaign includes the launch of new state and local policy initiatives to support workers' freedom to form unions and will double the number of allies engaged in the struggle. A centerpiece of the plan is a nationwide blitz to educate and mobilize tens of thousands of union stewards to lead the fight to restore workers' freedom to form unions and bargain collectively. Union stewards not only will help administer contracts and handle grievances, they also will be stewards of workplace democracy.

Richmond Baking Workers in Northwest Join BCTGM

Another bakery in the Northwestern U.S. has said “Yes” to BCTGM representation. On March 1, workers employed

at Richmond Baking of Oregon voted overwhelmingly to join BCTGM Local 114 (Portland, Ore.)



The Richmond Bakery workers pose for a photo with their new BCTGM Local 114 family. Pictured here is (standing, left to right)—Intl. Rep. Eric Anderson, Kimberly Rice (Packer), L. 114 Secy.-Treas. Terry Lansing, T.R. Arriola (Machine Operator), Jeremy Brown (Sheet Operator), Dena Ochoa (Quality Control), (family member behind sign), Eric Miller (Mixer), L. 114 Bus. Agnt. Gene Beaudoin, (kneeling, left to right) Randy Fish (Lead Mixer) and Mario Aldaco (Lead Sanitation). Not Pictured are: Lacey Kreiger (Quality Control) and Angelina Garcia (Packer).

The McMinnville, Oregon facility is one of three baking plants operated by Richmond Baking Company—the flagship plant is in Richmond, Ind. where workers are represented by BCTGM Local 372B. The company’s East Coast operations are based in Alma, Ga.

The McMinnville baking plant, built in 2001, produces organic cookies and crackers, cracker meal, and batter mixes for both the domestic and international market.

Initial contact with the Oregon workers occurred in the fall of 2005. Local 114 Business Agent, Terry Lansing, said conditions at the McMinnville plant were typical of non-union bakeries. “The workers there objected to the low wages, high turnover amongst the employees, and a general lack of respect from the managers and owners,” said Lansing.

With help from International Representative Eric Anderson, Local 114 representatives met with the McMinnville workers, discussed the conditions and problems, formed an organizing committee in the plant, and moved towards union certification.

The workers filed for Union recognition on December 27th and the National Labor Relations Board conducted the successful vote on March 1.

“We look forward to negotiating a fair contract for our new members, and inviting them into our Local,” said Lansing. Local 114 represents workers at Safeway, Fred Myers, Albertsons, and United States Bakery.

During the 70th Session of the BCTGM General Executive Board (GEB) in Las Vegas March 23-27, the GEB elected Local 203T (Richmond, Va.) Pres. William F.

Pearce Jr. to fill the vacancy in Region 2, Tobacco. Pearce replaces former Local 203 Pres. Oscar Giles, who retired in December 2005 after more than 31 years in the union. In other GEB changes, Local 389 (Winnipeg, N.B.) Fin. Secy. Herb Marx resigned as the Region 5 GEB member. Local 264 (Toronto) Fin. Secy. Ron Piercey was elected by acclamation to fill the Region 5 vacancy.

Pictured at right, BCTGM International President Frank Hurt (right) administers the Oath of Office to Pearce (left) during the annual spring meeting.



GEB CHANGES

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If you think finding an attorney has to be difficult and expensive...think again!

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Free Consultation and Follow-up

Oftentimes being able to talk to an attorney about a legal question can prevent it from turning into a legal problem. The **BCTGM Power Legal Service** lets its members consult with a program attorney (in person or over the phone) about almost any personal legal concern—for up to 30 minutes—for free. A member may consult with a lawyer as many times as he or she needs provided it is about a separate matter each time. In addition, personal documents—such as leases, insurance policies or sales contracts—will also be reviewed and explained at no charge. If the attorney thinks a follow-up letter or a phone call will resolve the situation, it will be done for free as well.

30 Percent Savings on Complex Services

Of course, some legal matters need more than 30 minutes of attention from an attorney. In such cases, members pay only 70 percent of the attorney's regular fee (except in contingency cases, where the attorney's fee is a percentage of any money recovered.) Plus, members get to see the fee in writing, in advance—so they won't be faced with any surprises later on.

Who is Eligible?

Union members, their spouses and dependents

Contact Information

Call **1-888-993-8886** 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. (ET) Monday – Friday; or visit www.bctgm.org/benefits/legal/legal2.htm for names of participating attorneys in your area.

Cost

There is no enrollment charge or annual fee, and it costs nothing to get the name of a participating attorney.

"WILDEST DREAMS"

Casting Call for Union Hunters & Anglers

The BCTGM-endorsed Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP) and the Outdoor Living Network (OLN) have teamed up to produce "Wildest Dreams," a new television show that will feature union workers on fantasy hunting or fishing trips.

10

LUCKY UNION SPORTSMEN WILL:

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Mail your Sportsman's Profile to:

TRCP

Attn: Wildest Dreams

555 11th Street N.W., 6th Floor

Washington, DC 20004

Email: mdorsey@trcp.org

**ENTRY DEADLINE
MAY 15, 2006**



To download an application or review the contest rules, visit: www.olntv.com/wildestdreams