

Guild Updates January 2009

Arbitration date set in 2% “Me-Too” wage increase

The arbitration on whether the company violated the contract when it failed to give Guild-represented employees the 2 percent wage increase granted to other company employees last year has been scheduled for April 15. A decision should be rendered by the end of June.

The Guild is seeking the 2 percent increase back to September 2007. Under the contract’s “Me-Too” clause the company is required to increase our wages by the same amount granted to other union. (The company has not made any wage offers in negotiations, but is seeking to eliminate both the “me-too” and no-wage cut clauses.)

The company has informed the Guild that it plans to give no wage increases in 2009.

Bargaining 2008: A year of company stalling.

The past year can best be described for what the Guild prevented the company from doing.

While no significant progress was achieved in negotiations, the Guild has prevented the company from significant changes in benefits.

The Guild has successfully used the grievance procedure to block cuts in the long-term disability program and retirement plans. In addition the Guild continues to resist T&G proposals that would strip employees of rights and benefits guaranteed by the contract.

For example, the Company wants to:

- Be able to change or eliminate retirement benefits at any time without negotiating.
- Eliminate caps on the cost of medical insurance.
- Be able to cut wages.
- Be able to pick and choose who can be laid off rather than following seniority.

Guild negotiators have been unable to find a single improvement in the Company’s contract proposal.

The next negotiating session is set for January 15 at 11 a.m. at the Guild’s office in the Bay State Bank Building, 32 Franklin St., Room 301, in Worcester. Guild members are welcome to observe the meeting.