

Local Lodge 1746

# insight

March, 2006

Volume 9, Issue 3

357 Main St.— East Hartford, CT. 06118 — Telephone: 568-3000

## Sikorsky Fight is Our Fight



**Teamsters Local 1150** is on strike against Sikorsky Aircraft in Stratford, Connecticut. The main sticking point is the company's shifting of health care costs to Teamsters members. While this seems to be a trend throughout corporate America this strike is important for our members at UTC Fuel Cells and Pratt & Whitney to watch because Sikorsky is a subsidiary of United Technologies. The

Hartford Courant reported: *George David, chairman of Sikorsky's parent company, United Technologies Corporation told analysts that the company will "stand firm" on the issue because workers throughout UTC's other divisions have agreed to the same kind of health care cost-sharing.*

In the same Courant article the union lashed back. *Why do the rich get even richer, while regular working Americans can't even hold onto their basic health care benefits*, Rocco Callo, the union's secretary-treasurer, said in a statement: *The head of United Technologies raked in \$13.4 million in total compensation and cashed out \$83.6 million in stock options and he wants to ax health care for the 3,600 teamsters on strike at Sikorsky.*

Local 1150's web page describes the reason for the strike as follows.

*Teamsters Local 1150 began a strike against Sikorsky Aircraft on Monday, February 20th over the company's failure to negotiate over healthcare benefits. The company introduced a package that initially doubles members' up front contributions in the first year and triples them by the third year. This huge increase in the burden upon the members will pay for a plan that drastically reduces coverage. 80/20 insurance with stop losses of \$3,500 per year for a family under the best scenario. Doctor visit co-pay increases and huge increases for prescriptions that do not count toward the stop losses or deductibles make this an unaffordable offer.*

*The company introduced this package more than 6 months prior to negotiations and informed the union that it would "never change". The union offered to keep the coverage the same as it was under the old contract by taking money out of wages or ratification bonuses to pay for the difference in health plan costs. The company rejected this offer. The cost difference that the company is refusing to allow workers to pay?... 31 cents per hour!*



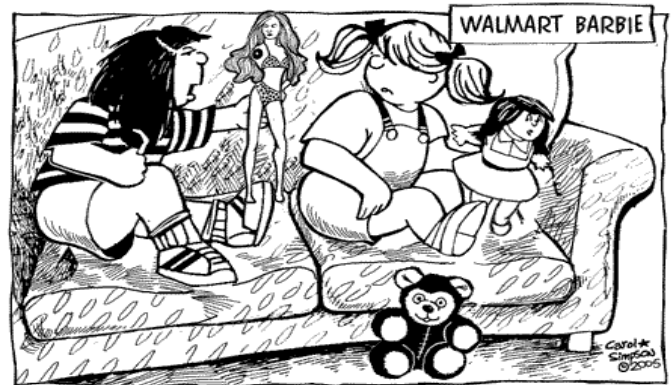
We have all been witness to UTC's corporate greed. Every time you use your health care benefits you realize how they have been watered down. Stop losses are higher, deductibles are higher and payroll contributions are higher. We pay more out of pocket each time we use the plan or receive our weekly check. UTC Fuel Cells contract expires on December 3, '06, and Pratt and Whitney's one year later. Pay close attention to the Sikorsky battle. Take the time to join the Teamsters on the picket line to show your support. Visit Teamsters Local 1150 at <http://www.teamsters1150.org/> and remember their battle is our battle... We could be next!!!

# SAVE THE WINCHESTER RIFLE PLANT

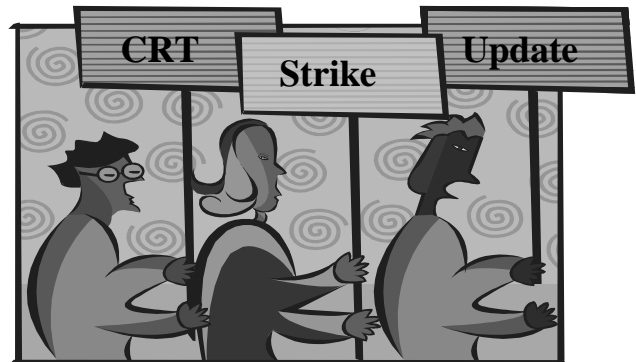
On Friday, March 3, 2006, Winchester workers, neighborhood residents, elected officials and other supporters held a rally at the plant gate of US Repeating Arms in New Haven's Newhallville neighborhood. The rally was in support of workers and their union -- IAM Local 609 -- which will hold negotiations with management this Monday about a plant closing agreement. Workers at US Repeating Arms are facing a plant closing as of March 31, 2006. The average age of the hourly workers is 52, with an average of 21 years of service to the company. US Repeating Arms is closing a manufacturing enterprise that has produced Winchester guns in New Haven, Connecticut for 140 years. The rally demanded that management offer a generous separation package to these loyal workers who find themselves out of work through no fault of their own.

Management must also be fully cooperative with efforts to find a new buyer who will operate the New Haven facility, continue to produce the Winchester, and employ the current union workforce. The City of New Haven and the Machinists Union are exploring all possible avenues to make this a reality.

Craig Gauthier, chair of the Citizens Ad Hoc Committee said: *"US Repeating Arms and their parent company -- Herstal Group in Belgium -- need to do right by the workers they are putting out on the street, and by the community and City that supported them all these years. To me, it looks like USRAC just ran this place into the ground, taking the best parts to other places in their world empire. We need new investors, a new approach, a real commitment to the product and the workers. US Repeating Arms has got to help make that happen -- and then goodbye and good riddance to them."*



"Great. Her arm came off and she can't afford health insurance."



## UAW Still on Strike at CRT Daycare Centers

**Strikers to Attend Local 1746  
Sunday Meeting in March**

Daycare workers at Community Renewal Team (CRT) centers throughout the state have been walking the picket line since November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005. CRT is the biggest "anti-poverty" agency in the state, with a multi-million dollar annual budget. But the Board of Directors has refused to budge from their poverty level wage offer of 1%, over the entire 3 year contract period.

In February, a large group of community & union supporters joined the strike line in front of CRT Headquarters in Hartford. Members of our local have picketed, and brought soup to the strikers on the cold line. A group of State Legislators -- led by Hartford State Representatives Ken Green and Evelyn Mantilla -- has started putting pressure on the Directors of CRT...but neither Hartford mayor Perez, nor Governor Rell, wants to get involved.

At this Sunday's monthly meeting, we will welcome representatives from the UAW to tell us about their strike. We will also pass-the-hat and make a donation for the strikers.



# NEW ALCOHOL/DRUG TESTING RULES



On Jan. 10, 2006, new regulations went into effect with the FAA Drug and Alcohol Testing Program. Please keep in mind that these rules are part of **Federal Law**, and are not part of any Pratt & Whitney, nor Machinist Union agreements. P&W spoke out against these new regulations repeatedly. While the new regulations were specifically for the addition of subcontractors to the drug testing pool, the overall effect (for us) is that many more people within PWA will be added to the drug and alcohol testing pool. The total number will be over 1000 additional people.

The people that will be affected are basically those that do “hands on” work with aftermarket parts. The exact number and locations of these people/jobs is still being discussed between the company and the union. The important thing to keep in mind is that ***this will happen***. This is a Federal mandate. If you know, or think that you are working on these parts, be aware that these new regulations will be affecting you.

If you are presently using any illicit drugs, or have drinking issues, it is important to seek assistance at the earliest possible opportunity. **The one sure thing your union can do for you is to get you help with these problems.** The union should shortly be able to identify the people and locations to be affected. If you need assistance, please use one of the opportunities available to you listed below.

Pratt & Whitney, unlike most other employers, offers their employees 2 “bites at the apple”. At most other employers, your first drug test failure will result in your termination, and loss of your job career with the FAA. It is important to remember that the first failure stays with you forever. If you failed a regulated drug test in the past, whether at PWA, or another employer, that past failure counts as your “first strike”. Also, if you did not complete a program, under the oversight of an SAP (Substance Abuse Professional), you will be required to do so now.

The new regulations are presently scheduled to take effect on April 10, 2006. This means you will probably be scheduled to participate in the indoctrination meetings, and subject to drug and/or alcohol testing around this time frame. The drug and alcohol rules will be explained to you fully; please be sure you understand them and **ask questions** if you do not understand them. The rules must be followed explicitly by the **employee and the person giving you the drug or alcohol test.**

If you feel your questions were not addressed fully, please contact the Union Hall, and ask for Earl Schofield. He has copies of all the rules and regulations. Earl also has his accreditation as a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP), and company approval to provide services in that position.

If you need assistance with a substance misuse problem, please contact your Local Lodge EAP Coordinator:

**East Hartford: Lenny Ward 708-4186 (pgr.)**

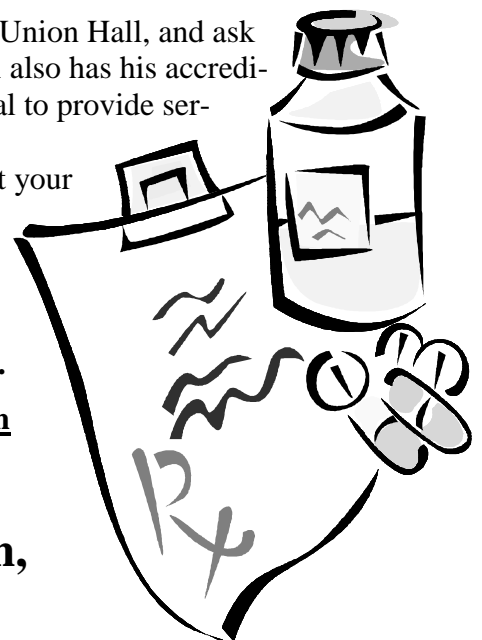
**Your District 26 EAP Coordinator is Earl Schofield, located in East Hartford (568-3000).**

**Cheshire: Gerry Marcil**

**Middletown: Dan Boissonneault.**

**While we hope that the FAA will honor P & W's request for an extension to the April 10<sup>th</sup> implementation time frame, we cannot assume they will grant it.**

**Please act NOW to address your problem, if you have one.**





## A “Living Wage” for Manchester???

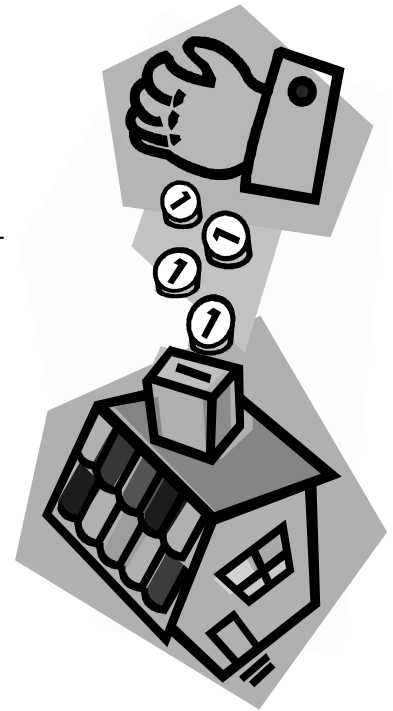
In early February a Living Wage Ordinance was proposed to the Manchester Town Board of Directors by Democrats on that body. Wages, especially at low-paying jobs, are not keeping up with huge cost of living increases in oil, gas, medical care and housing. If Manchester taxes are used to hire people, purchase goods or services from companies, or if big tax breaks are given to businesses (like at Buckland Mall) **then workers at these companies should be paid a living wage, not kept at poverty levels.**

If passed, the Living Wage Ordinance (LWO) would set a wage & benefit level for certain workers in Manchester, based on an hourly rate of 115% of the federal poverty level, about \$11.06 an hour, plus benefits. Workers covered by this ordinance would be:

- 1] Full-time, permanent Manchester Town employees
- 2] Workers of businesses with town contracts of over \$25,000
- 3] Workers in Manchester businesses who receive town tax breaks or credits from the town in excess of \$25,000

Non-profit agencies and businesses with less than 25 employees would be **exempt** from the LWO, as would Manchester Board of Education employees. The ordinance would only apply to town contracts or tax breaks in the future, not those already in effect. Full time town employees are almost all unionized, and already make more than the proposed LWO.

Machinist Union members from Local 1746 and Local 743 (Hamilton-Sunstrand) who live in Manchester have been very active in the Manchester Living Wage Coalition over the last few months. Members have attended rallies, signed postcards, written letters to the editors, and testified at town hearings in favor of the Living Wage Ordinance in Manchester. Now we are counting on Manchester Democrats, who have a 6-3 majority on the Board of Directors, to pass this important law soon. If you live in Manchester, please call the following members of the Manchester Board of Directors: tell them you support the **LIVING WAGE ORDINANCE (introduced in February) for MANCHESTER:**



**JOSEPH HACHEY: 647-9272~~~~~KEVIN ZINGLER: 432-2022**

**If you are out of work long-term, and would like to receive a copy of *INSIGHT* mailed to you, please contact:**

**District 26 Business Representative Steve Merrick**

**Or**

**Leave your name and request with the secretary: 568-3000**

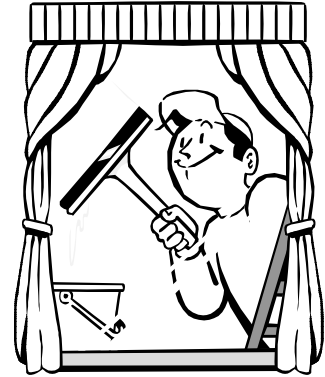
***Thank You***



## GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER: CHEAP AND GUILT FREE

It may sound a little far fetched, but you can get away with murder in this country simply by hiring the individual that you want to murder. It's amazing that organized crime has not caught on to this **murder by hire** scheme. Organized crime killers normally murder for hire and suffer huge penalties and long prison terms as a result.

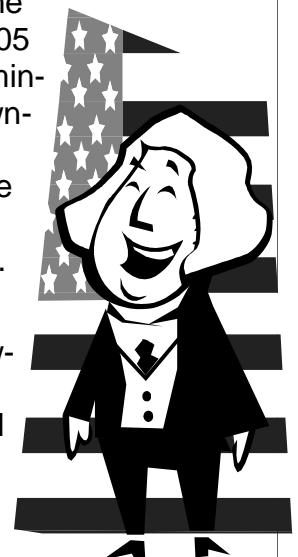
How does this scheme work? Here's one example from Kansas City, MO. A father of three starts a new job as a window washer. Suddenly the window washing platform he is working from gives out and this poor fellow is sent on a deadly 84 foot free-fall. He'd been on the job for all of 3 hours; he must have had all of 15 minutes of training. OSHA launches an investigation the next morning and cites the Holden, Missouri window cleaning company for serious safety violations. The same company had a fatal accident only 4 years ago that involved another free-falling employee. The fine for a second free-falling employee **or murder by hiring**: only \$2500.

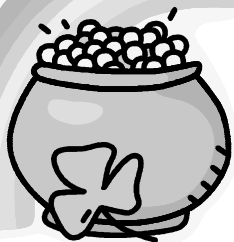


Now if a 84 foot free fall is too expensive, how about renting a back hoe for a day, then investing in a pick and shovel. This is a cheap but commonly used method for murdering an employee. Just pick a day when rain is forecast then, with the rented back-hoe, dig a trench about 6 feet deep. Send the object of your murderous affections into the trench with a pick and shovel while, forgetting to rent a trench box. In no time that employee will be dead from being crushed by dirt or even drowned by mud. The OSHA fine for that might be as high as \$3000 which is a bargain, when you consider a decent murder defense lawyer will cost a 100 times as much. Even better--just like long distance phone calls--OSHA's fines just keep getting lower.

This may sound illogical, but the total fines for The Sago Coal Mine in West Virginia for 2004 and 2005 were only \$33,000. In the last month of 2005, 16 miners died working in a non-union Sago mine. The owners of the mine knew the mine was unsafe. MASHA, the federal agency in charge of mine safety, had told the owners 2 years before that the mine was unsafe. The owners were cited and fined for the years 2004 and 2005 a grand total of \$33,000 by MASHA.

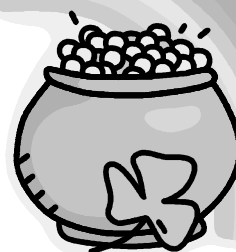
Just to show you where our government's sense of priorities lie, another federal agency, the FCC, fined CBS Television Network \$550,000 for showing Janet Jackson flashing her boob on a Super Bowl Sunday. Meanwhile we have the biggest boob in the whole wide world for president. He gets all the television time in the world and nobody gets fined. Only in a Bush inspired America.





*Top of the Meeting to ya  
and all the Luck!*

**Next Monthly Meeting**  
**March 12th at 11:00 am**



**Please email your  
announcements &  
messages.**

**Items for the next issue must  
be emailed by April 1st 2006.**

**localodge1746@snet.net**

## **WEBSITES:**

**[www.iamLL1746.org](http://www.iamLL1746.org)**

**[www.iamdistrict26.org](http://www.iamdistrict26.org)**

**[www.goiam.org](http://www.goiam.org)**

**[www.shopunionmade.org](http://www.shopunionmade.org)**

## *Dinners are Served :*

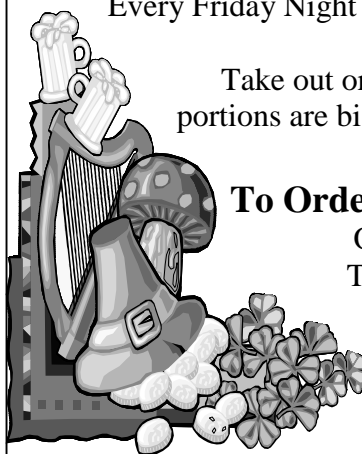
Every Friday Night at the Machinists Club.

Take out orders are available,  
portions are big, and the price is right.

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Orders taken on  
Thursday or Friday  
From 4-8pm.

Weekly Menus are  
posted in the shop.



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