

# THE SPOTLIGHT

5724 Seward, Lincoln, NE 68507 • (402) 434-2970 • [www.inebraska.com/~uswa286](http://www.inebraska.com/~uswa286)

**MAY  
2002**

## Congratulations May Winners

Winners from  
Local 286 in the  
Nebraska State  
AFL-CIO  
Calendar Raffle  
for the month of  
May are:

Mike Miller  
Amy Lynch

## NOTICE Union Representation Bill Passes

The 2002 Legislature passed LB 29 and on April 17, 2002, the Governor of the State of Nebraska approved and signed this bill.

LB 29 amends Section 48-838 on the Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska and requires an employee who is not a member of the labor organization who chooses to have legal representation from the labor organiza-

tion in any grievance or legal action, such employee shall reimburse the labor organization for actual legal fees and court costs incurred by the labor organization in representing the employee in such grievance or legal action.

**Election Day  
is Tuesday, May 14th!**



**N**ominations and election of delegates for the 31st Constitutional Convention of the United Steelworkers of

America will be held on June 9, 2002 at the June Regular Monthly Membership Meeting. Four delegates will be elected to attend this convention along with our Local 286 President, Hugh Bowen. Please watch for the official notification of this election which will be posted in the plant prior to the June union meeting.

**June 2002**

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	<b>NEXT REGULAR MEMBERSHIP MEETING</b>  June 9, 2002 2:00 p.m. Union Hall 5724 Seward				
16	17					
23	24					
30						

Ucinda Sims, Editor  
Hugh Bowen, President



## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

**Hugh Bowen**

On Monday, May 6th, 2002, our bargaining committee submitted a proposal to the company. At that time, it became the company's responsibility to respond. International representative Terel Smith is returning to Lincoln on Wednesday, May 8th and will be here Wednesday afternoon, Thursday and Friday. Hopefully we will have a response from the company by then. He will be assisting us to respond to their decision on the submitted proposal.

In the event that our bargaining committee and the company would reach a tentative agreement, the company has indicated that they would like to rush through a vote and be done with everything as soon as possible.

Needless to say, the system in place, which includes approval of any agreement by corporate in Akron before it can

be considered for a vote by our membership, does not allow for expedience.

We will continue to keep you informed along each step of the way.

As posted in the plant, we have recently lost our Financial Secretary. The Executive Board is accepting written requests for consideration for the position. Those requests must be submitted to myself by 3:00 P.M. on Monday, May 20th, 2002. All requests will be reviewed by the Executive Board at the May 20th meeting. The Executive Board will be making a recommendation to the membership for approval.

We currently have 226 people on layoff and approximately 1150 - 1200 active members. On May 7th, the sub fund climbed to 10.62%. Because it's above 10 percent, updates will be monthly. The next update will be in June.

★ **THE NEBRASKA  
PRIMARY  
ELECTION IS  
MAY 14TH.  
DON'T FORGET  
TO VOTE.**

Check out our  
new Blue Jean  
Jackets at the Union  
Hall. They have the  
USWA Local 286 logo  
over the front pocket  
and available through  
COPE or with cash.

## Our WTO at Work Here?

I read the following in the current issue of the Union Labor Report.

"Three new Labor Department grants totaling \$17 million were announced in the April 18 Federal Register (67 Fed. Reg. 19,273) that would help combat abusive child labor in several countries by providing educational opportunities as an alternative to work. Citing data from the International Labor organization, DOL said that there are approximately 250 million working children between the ages of 5 and 14 in developing countries. Half of these children, it said, work full-time and therefore generally are unable to attend school."

I have been wondering if the elected representatives for our state agree with this decision. Is this the World Trade Organization (WTO) at work? Is this decision to spend our Department of Labor dollars in this way supported by Senators Hagel and Nelson or by Congressmen Bereuter, Terry or Osborne?

What about the educational opportunities of Nebraska's children?

John Shotkoski, Vice President, Local 286

## IN THE EDITOR'S OPINION

Ucinda Sims

A recent newspaper article featured a Nebraska beef grower as he promoted boycotting McDonalds because of their use of foreign beef.

Our State Legislature passed LB29 and it was signed by

the governor.

At the recent Berkshire-Hathaway shareholders meeting in Omaha, Warren Buffett and his Vice Chairman, Charlie Munger, told the crowd that "stock options for CEO's are demented and immoral." "You ought to be thinking more about being the right example," Munger said. "The system of using stock options contributes to a lot of gross excess." Berkshire "does not give its executives stock options, but," Buffett said, "it will be difficult to change the system of stock options in the rest of corporate America. Corporate CEO's have their hands on the switch and in the end, the CEO's tend to get what they want." "It's shameful," he said. "This group that is fed very well doesn't want their corporate expenses recorded."

These three tidbits of information do not seem to have anything in common. But if you look really carefully, you will see

that the common thread is the message that we, as union members, have been shouting from the hilltops from the beginning. Messages like BUY AMERICAN, Fair Share and equitable and fair treatment for the workers.

Slowly, they are catching on. Slowly, they are joining the fight. And slowly, one step at a time, we will win because we are right.

And we are right. We dare not stand idly by while corporate America has its way with us. Corporate greed and corporate terrorism is alive and well. Workers lose while corporations take more and more. The problem is rarely the need to make money. More often than not, it is the simple need to make MORE money. And that is greed.

With careless disregard for the customer and the consumer, companies threaten to move their facilities to places like Mexico where they know they can make more money at the expense of the Mexican workers and the environment. Lower quality goods does not seem to deter them. And trying to use this threat to gain even more is pure and simple terrorism against American workers.

As we watch others join our fight, we can be reassured that this battle is not over. We will win. And we will win together.



*The Lincoln Action Program has awarded the USWA Local 286 Community Service Committee its Volunteer of the Year award.*

*Congratulations to the members of this committee and its chairperson, Milt Schmidt for a job well done. Thank you for the tireless hours that you give to help the community and its residences. Thank you also to the many volunteers who assist the committee throughout the year.*

*The officers and members of USWA Local 286 appreciate the work you do and the positive image and message that you take to the community on behalf of our members and our union.*



## Retiree's Corner

The URW Local 286 Retirees Club will be on vacation for the months of June, July, and August. Watch for a report on the May Chicken Dinner final meeting and keep an eye out for information in the August newsletter about resuming club meetings in September.

*Enjoy your  
summer vacation!*

On June 1, 2002 The Cattleman's Ball will be held at the Benes Cattle Company, Valparaiso, NE. Proceeds to this benefit go to the University of Nebraska Eppley Cancer Center.

Everyone has been touched by someone they know who has cancer or had cancer. We are asking for your help, come out and join us for a heart filled day of fun and entertainment. All kinds of activities for everyone. For tickets or information contact Don Suchy Ext. 8629 or call 1-800-666-8071.

### A Message from Senator David M. Landis

Some people think government is unreachable, that it has "face". Others shrug off involvement, believing everything is done by lobbyists. "The System" is too big to listen to a small voice. Luckily, these people are mistaken. Many ideas for statutes have occurred because one citizen recognized how a change in state law would solve a problem or make a difference.

For instance, a few years ago a University student living in my district called to ask me why Nebraska didn't sponsor a "free fishing day." He thought there should be a time each year when people could use the state parks or go fishing with buying a permit. I had never heard of a "free fishing day" before. Because of this young man's efforts, Nebraskans now enjoy an annual open house in our state park system. This year Free Fishing Day is Saturday, May 18th.

Some subjects are more serious. One woman asked me about the possibility of amending the motor vehicle statutes to allow the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue a handicapped license plate for a motorcycle. She enjoyed this low cost form of transportation, but had a physical disability that made it hard for her to get from a parking lot into a building. I discovered that most states already made this accommodation, and that she was not the only disabled rider in my district. Today there is a special handicapped plate for motorcycles. It happened because one person called.

Not all problems require a law to get something done. For at least four years I have worked to provide the tools to help teachers and students resolve conflicts and deal with behavior problems in schools. This topic was brought to my attention by a group of teachers at Lincoln Northeast High School. This year's version focused on district-wide policies to deal with bullying in schools. The State Board of Education stepped forward and asked for the opportunity to address this problem by rule rather than statute. The method of accomplishing this work is not nearly as important as the work itself, so if we get more for action with a department rule than state law, terrific!

These examples are reminders that behind every law is at least one flesh and blood person, a teacher, a disabled motorcyclist, a fisherman. I have served in the Legislature for 24 years and have gotten 300 bills passed. Some have affected a broad area of public policy. Yet sometimes the satisfaction of the job is knowing you have helped one person - and you know their name, where they live, and just exactly how things will be better for them. It has been my privilege to serve as a Nebraska State Senator. I have learned how to succeed in "the System," and I will work hard to keep this job so I can make a difference for the people of North Lincoln.

Even if it's one person at a time.

*David Landis is the Nebraska State Senator for District 46. District 46 covers a portion of North Lincoln including the Lincoln Goodyear Plant. He has been endorsed for re-election by the Nebraska State AFL-CIO and by USWA Local 286.*