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GUEST EDITOR

Guest Commentary

By Jeff Barry

My name is Jeff Barry, son of John P. (Jack) Barry Jr., a loyal member of Local 17. In 1981, as I was scraping nickels together to attend college in the fall, I received a very exciting call from my dad. I had been awarded a \$500.00 scholarship to be applied toward my college tuition. To me, it was an incredibly generous offer. Not only because I was very much in need of funds at the time, but even more so because this gift was given to me by folks, many of which I did not even know. With that, I began to appreciate my dad's loyalty to Local 17 and respect the members that make up this group of very hard working people.

My dad and his father before him, who was also a strong leader in Local 17, believed in the inherent need for each generation to improve upon their parents' generation. For my grandfather, that meant moving from Ireland to start a new life in Chicago. For my father, that meant moving his family from 57th and Aberdeen out to what he fondly referred to as the "suburb of Oak Lawn to live with a bunch of candy asses." Anybody who knew my dad though, knew that he was extremely proud of what he was able to accomplish and the lifestyle his Local afforded his family. For me, college would be the means to improve upon my father's generation. And the scholarship Local 17 provided me in my first year of school helped me focus my efforts on my studies rather than finances. I am happy to report the College education that my dad wanted me to acquire, has allowed me to meet his dream that I would improve my lot in life.

In 1981, not only did I receive the scholarship, I received a real education from Local 17. My dad had arranged for me to be a helper on job sites over the holidays. Sitting up 20 feet in the air, on a pipe in the middle of December taking in the wonderful smells at Darling Chemical would keep any 19 year old in College. I do believe that was my dad's intent and I appreciated the work and the education.

In November of 2004, my dad succumbed to Mesothelioma brought on by his exposure to asbestos. When he had reached 70 years old in good health, we all felt he had dodged the bullet. But like you all know better than me, you live with this lingering danger. Many in your Local, and I can't name them all here, supported our family through those very rough times and my family and I very much appreciated that support. My dad never felt sorry for himself and felt he had a good run at life. However, those of us who knew him and loved him wished he had more time.

In lieu of that time, I would like to offer something positive to keep his spirit with us and to give back something to this union that was there for me in my time of need. I have arranged with Brian Glynn to establish an annual scholarship in honor and memory of my dad. It will be the Jack Barry Memorial Scholarship. It will be a \$1000.00 cash scholarship paid to any graduating high school son or daughter of a Local 17 member that is continuing on to college. Just like the current scholarship that is "drawn from a hat", everyone will have an equal chance of winning this scholarship. The scholarship will be awarded on Family Night at the August Union meeting.

I am very excited about this opportunity to keep my dad's spirit alive within your Local. I think it is something that my dad would like me to do and something that is fitting with his ideal that each generation should improve upon their fathers'. Thanks again for the support through the rough times and I look forward to personally awarding the first Jack Barry Memorial Scholarship this August.

DECEASED MEMBERS

These members have served Local 17 well. Our Local will remember them for eternity.

Frank Lukas	R# 25892	12-15-05
Timothy Murphy	R# 37251	12-15-05
Edward Gedmin	R# 25850	02-
Ernest Brown	R# 9637	03-15-06
Winne Hines, retired Local 17 union office secretary		01-25-06
Mary Artman retired Local 17 Fund administrator		03-04-06

RETIREEES

Local 17 would like to honor these recent retirees. **CONGRATULATIONS!**

Kevin C. Crosse	R# 32214	01-01-06
Robert Fogarty, Jr.	R# 37176	01-01-06
Richard Persons	R# 37268	01-01-06
Dennis Plachy	R# 40777	01-01-06

REMEMBER THE RETIREE LUNCHEON ON APRIL 3RD!

INSULATION INDUSTRY

With each passing year there are more breakthroughs in technology. As a trade we may not be thrilled with the idea, but as we have said many times before – there is no way to hide from technology. We have to learn to adapt to it. One of the patterns we've noticed is that the successful contractors are the ones "in the know" about our industry. They are aware of new products and can foresee the trends in our industry. The rest of the contractors are merely marginal & just getting by.

It occurred to us that the officers and contractors are attempting to stay in touch w/the industry, but we are not reaching our membership with any of this information. We have decided to pluck the best articles about our industry & pass them out at each union meeting. The more informed our membership is - the stronger we are.

We'll keep a backlog of 2 or 3 months on hand, so if you miss a meeting you can pick up past articles at the next union meeting. These articles will cover a variety of subjects. But no matter the subject, it will help us understand the industry and be able to talk to a customer more intelligently about insulation. We must have the facts to back up our claims of energy savings and show them the true cost of NOT insulating.

ENERGY SAVINGS

Our union hall is going to appreciate a real energy savings with our new light fixtures. The old fixtures were 160 watts each. The new ones are only 96 watts. If you do the math with 85 fixtures we will be saving 5440 watts. That is equal to 90 - 60-watt light bulbs left on in your house. The other benefit on energy savings should be realized because we insulated all the ductwork in the union's ceilings.

TIDBITS

The Drug Policy Booklets should be in all our member's hands by the first week of April.

Local 17 experienced great weather for both St. Patrick Day Parades. We had great showings at both and had a very nice turnout at St. John Fisher's Parish Hall after the Southside Parade. It was great to see all the kids! Thanks to all in attendance.

Economic Policy Institute reported that the gap between CEOs' pay and workers' pay continued to escalate, with the average CEO making 431 times the salary of a production worker in 2004, up from 301 to one in 2003. In the mid-1960s, the average CEO made 24 times the workers' annual pay. Total compensation for CEO of a median U.S. Company increased dramatically in 2004, with average CEO receiving 91 percent raise, reported by the Corporate Library. This is the thought process of a "Trickle -Down " economy. It is a travesty we wish was published more often to demonstrate to everyone that the UNIONS are not the bad guys.

FROM YOUR FUND OFFICE

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, "HIPAA", is a federally mandated regulation for privacy and confidentiality practices. As of January 1, 2006 in the state of Illinois, you can no longer have personal information on benefit cards. Therefore, the Fund office sent participants new Rx America and Blue Cross/Blue Shield cards with their new alternate ID numbers. Please discard the old Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Rx America cards and start using the new cards that were sent to you with new numbers. Please note that the new number begins with HFA803.

You are not to use your Blue Cross/Blue Shield card if you are Medicare eligible. Please show the doctors and facilities the Fund's yellow identification card along with your Medicare card so they will submit claims and explanation of benefits from Medicare to the Fund office for secondary payment.

It's that time of year again. Active participants should have received their pension and VEBA statements recently. Upon receipt, please review them and if you have differences in the hours worked or paid, submit your original paycheck stubs to the Fund Office. Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information on the statements.

Editors,

B. Glynn, J. Crinion, J. Caddick, D. Byrne, Donna