

# Communications Workers of America



# Local 4501 Communicator

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November/December, 2012

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## Local 4501 Communicator

Michael Secrest [msecres@cwa4501.org](mailto:msecres@cwa4501.org) Editor/Contributor. Writes all articles not specifically attributed to others.

President Richard Murray contributes a quarterly message and oversight. Sheila Collins keeps our Facebook current and serve with Lolita Thomas, Lee Paul and Michael Secrest on the Communications Committee.

Cynthia Stewart [cstewart@cwa4501.org](mailto:cstewart@cwa4501.org) writes voter empowerment articles, and more



President Murray

## A Time for Thanks (and wishes)

Though it was not the squeaker it was expected to be, Ohio still turned the tide. I want to thank so many people who chose to wait in line for hours, and did not let the Conservative coalition, led by Mr. Karl Rove, who is also known as Bush's Brain and other epithets too inappropriate to enter onto these pages. **Let's just say that there are now two new four-letter words in my vocabulary, K\*rl and R\*ve.** And you know what? He took nearly a billion (with a **b**) dollars and wasted it on ads to try to buy the election, not only for Mitt Romney, but also for **conservative senatorial candidates from across the U.S., (including**

**Josh Mendel, who ran against Senator Sherrod Brown here in Ohio).** So Karl Rove is on the outs. That loud flushing sound was a billion dollars leaving the hands of rich conservatives. And they don't like seeing their money wasted. There are other operatives, people waiting to make money off the rich by doing their bidding at the polls. Others waiting in line behind Karl Rove, who, through his brilliance as a weasel, has had the support of all the multi-billionaires. Wealthy old men who want to reach out to other states to steal Christmas from children. Like they can't create enough misery in their own states. Don't you love to see Conservatives eating their own? I suggest in 2014, the multi-billionaires get together, contribute all the money they can and put it into a

large dumpster and let Karl Rove set it on fire. Or they could do something benevolent and constructive, instead of trying to run my life like I'm some kind of @#\$\$%^\* puppet. **I wish they'd keep their hands off our rights and let us pull the \$% &# lever for the candidate of our choice and not have to wait in line for hours to do it!** And most of all I wish **all politicians** and their campaign managers and political parties would observe truth in advertising. **There are laws designed to assure such truths. Why are Politicians exempt from those laws?** So Santa, thanks for the K\*rl R\*ve failures, and I just gave you a couple of ideas for gifts to put under my tree. With God's help, maybe we will all be so blessed.

\*Karl Rove, (pardon my Klatchian)

Local 4501 CWA Communications Team

# Have an incredible Holiday Season!

# PERFORMANCE RAISES AND HOW TO EARN THEM

You can be thankful for this clarification, if you use it right

## You have a right to not be left out in the cold

**Article 41** of your new contract calls for a combination of across the board raises and merit raises. In 2013, for instance, bargaining unit members will receive a raise of 2%, with the possibility of a performance increase of 0%-2%.

And **Article 21 and Appendix D** tell you how to answer the questions **What do I have to do, exactly, to earn a “meets expectations” and what must I do to earn “exceeds expectations”?**

### **BUT GUESS WHAT!**

Article 21 and Appendix D and the letter on page 4 of this publication also say that the above information will be communicated to you, by management, at or near **the beginning of the evaluation period.** Their responsibility is to continuously evaluate and improve the process.

I'm sure you have all heard of **MERP, the Merit Effectiveness Review Panel.** (A quick explanation of the panel: It is made up of six people, three from management and three from the union. There may also be a Neutral, who will serve as facilitator.)

But MERP is reactive. If you wait until you get your raise and realize that it is not what you have been led to expect, **at this point, submitting it to MERP is your only recourse.** It may not be an effective enough tool for righting such wrongs. **BUT, MUCH CAN BE DONE BEFORE YOU GET TO THIS POINT.**

And it all has to do with you mak-

ing sure that your managers let you know what you need to do to get the maximum compensation.

**Do you think Merit Raises will work for you?**

**If your manager doesn't know exactly what you are supposed to do to earn a meets or exceeds expectations, contact your steward.**

**If your manager seems to be setting you up to fail in any way, contact your steward.**

**If your manager is trying to explain but cannot make it crystal clear what you are supposed to accomplish, contact your union steward.**

**If what your manager says you are expected to do is something you believe to be unjust, contact your union steward.**

There is another less known entity, **The Performance Evaluation Oversight Committee (PEOC),** that is organized to make sure your evaluation is conducted in a fair way, the way it is intended in the contract. The whole idea of Ar-

ticle 21 and Appendix D is to give you obtainable goals so whether you achieve them is up to you. But can your supervisor handle it well enough and fairly enough?

This puts your future in your hands if, and only if, management is trained well enough to train you to achieve success on their playing field.

At the risk of being boring, let me restate.

**Your managers have the responsibility to help you achieve your best. Good, clear communications on their part is essential. This is the first step in the team effort.**

**Realizing that your manager may not remember, it is up to you to politely remind them. And ask your stewards to intervene on your behalf or call your union hall.**



# Union History, the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire

The greed, the brutality, the dead.

Be thankful for those who died for your rights. And remember, those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it

*from the Cornell University School of International Labor Relations*

The fire at the Triangle Waist Company in New York City, which claimed the lives of 146 young immigrant workers, is one of the worst disasters since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.

This incident has great significance to this day because **it highlights the inhumane working conditions to which industrial workers can be subjected.** To many, its horrors epitomize the extremes of industrialism.

The tragedy still dwells in the collective memory of the nation and of the international labor movement. The victims of the tragedy are still celebrated as martyrs at the hands of industrial greed.

The Triangle Waist Company was in many ways a typical sweated factory in the heart of Manhattan, at 23-29 Washington Place, at the northern corner of Washington Square East. Low wages, excessively long hours, and unsanitary and dangerous working conditions were the hallmarks of sweatshops. Even though many workers toiled under one roof in the Asch build-

ing, owned by Max Blanck and Isaac Harris. The owners subcontracted much work to individuals who hired the hands and pocketed a portion of the profits. Subcontractors could pay the workers whatever rates they wanted, often



extremely low. The owners supposedly never knew the rates paid to the workers, nor did they know exactly how many workers were employed at their factory at any given point. Such a system led to exploitation. The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union organized workers in the women's clothing trade. Many of the garment workers before 1911 were unorganized, partly because they were young immigrant women intimidated by the alien surroundings. Others were more daring, though. All were ripe for action against the poor working conditions. In 1909, an incident at the Triangle Factory sparked a spontaneous walkout of its 400 employees. The Women's

Trade Union League, a progressive association of middle class white women, helped the young women workers picket and fence off thugs and police provocation. At a historic meeting at Cooper Union, thousands of garment workers from all over the city followed young Clara Lemlich's call for a general strike.

With the cloakmakers' strike of 1910, a historic agreement was reached, that established a grievance system in the garment industry. Unfortunately for the workers, though, many shops were still in the hands of unscrupulous owners, who disregarded basic workers' rights and imposed unsafe working conditions on their employees.

Near closing time on Saturday afternoon, March 25, 1911, a fire broke out on the top floors of the Asch Building in the Triangle Waist Company. **By the time the fire was over, 146 of the 500 employees had died. The survivors were left to live and relive those agonizing moments. The victims and their families, the people passing by who witnessed the desperate leaps from ninth floor windows, and the City of New York would never be the same.**

This is the first of a three part series on the triangle shirtwaist fire-those who died are some of the shoulders on which we stand. The next: The aftermath, the sorrow, the step forward



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July 10, 2012

Mr. Richard Murráy, President  
Communications Workers of America, Local 4501  
27 Euclid Avenue  
Columbus, Ohio 43201

Dear CWA Members and President Murráy,

As part of the University's continued commitment to improving the performance management process in areas with CWA bargaining unit members, the University agrees to include the following statement in college and business unit performance management tools by the beginning of the 2013 – 2014 performance planning cycle:

"The supervisor should be able to articulate, to the employee, the differences among the various levels of achievement at the time of the goal setting session."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Simpson', written over a horizontal line.

David Simpson  
Labor Relations Manager

Office of Human Resources  
The Ohio State University  
1590 N. High Street, Suite 300  
Columbus, OH 43201

This letter from The Ohio State University Human Resources illustrates, as I have said, the intent of the University to instruct their managers, your bosses, to be able to communicate clearly to you what you are required to do to get a "meets expectations" and what you need to do to get an "exceeds expectations". These communications should be given at the beginning of the evaluation period. This information should then be a tool you can use to get your best evaluation.

It is up to you and **4501** to see that clarity and transparency are obvious at every step of this process. But remember that you are the YOU in union. It is up to you to let us know what trouble you are having with this process, and what part of the process is unclear to you.