

Hello Everyone,

Well it has been a while since I have had a chance to sit down and write an update. It has been an incredibly busy time and I want to apologize for taking so long to write an update. First off, I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year.

Update on JCI

Due to the latest developments in the JCI situation, I felt it was very important I send out an update as to what is happening with this workplace. During the latest round of bargaining this past November with Johnson Controls, the bargaining committee was putting pressure on both JCI and Chrysler to secure a product for the life of the agreement. We were also trying to bring in new work to absorb the laid off members. As we moved closer to a possible strike with JCI, Chrysler became concerned about a work disruption in the WAP and in the final hours agreed in writing to take care of the current workforce.

This was not something we dreamed up that morning; there was a letter still in place with Chrysler that in the case of JCI losing their contract with Chrysler, the company would look at replacing the work, finding a new employer for the members, or hiring the workers as new hires at Chrysler. This letter was put in place about five years ago and the company agreed to honor the agreement that was already in place. We never thought the company would hire new employees so we felt comfortable with the agreement at the time and came to an agreement with JCI.

Just prior to Christmas holidays we received a call from Chrysler notifying us that discussions were ongoing between themselves and JCI in regards to the Chrysler headliner contract and there was a possibility they were going to move the work out of the Lake Shore facility if an agreement was reached. At this time we re-confirmed with Chrysler their commitment to the workers at JCI. Chrysler made it very clear that if JCI closed they were prepared to hire all the JCI members as new hires.

This may sound like wonderful news, but in reality it is nothing to celebrate. Any time you lose good paying jobs in our community it is not good. Yes the workers will be taken care of, but if JCI remained a viable business all these good paying jobs would remain and sooner or later Chrysler would have had to hire. The work which is normally performed in the JCI facility will be moved to another facility in the Detroit area so it's not like the work is staying within our community. These jobs are lost forever.

We would prefer to keep JCI open as a viable business, but if they choose to close up, we as a union must focus on our members and how we can help them. Some of these members have 10 years with JCI and will now be forced to start over with a new company. Unfortunately there were changes to new hires in the collective agreement in the latest round of bargaining in 2009 so these new members will fall under the new agreement and will not be made whole for six years. These workers will be hired on as new hires so their start date will be their seniority date.

In order to make room for new members the company will be offering buy-outs to our members in Chrysler starting with the senior person and working our way through the different levels of retirements. These buy-outs will be \$75 thousand dollars with **no car voucher**. As of this report there are approximately 90 active members at JCI and another 30 on lay-off that we hope to absorb in the WAP.

Again, as of this report the timing is as follows: We will begin the canvassing in WAP for the retirements on February 1st, 2010 and all those retiring must be gone or retired by the end of March 2010. The plan is to move the JCI members into WAP between March 13th and March 31st, 2010. We will try to keep you updated as we go through this process.

Another lay-off week at WAP

As all of you already know we are down for a week starting today for the remainder of the week. It is my understanding a supplier is having issues with attaining raw materials to produce a part for the key fob. Unfortunately we found this out late Thursday and most of our members were caught off guard by the quick decision to close for a week.

The good news is this is not a week off for lack of sales or inventory adjustment, it is due to vendor related issues and we will more than likely have to make up the lost units. See you when you get back.

Update on Chrysler

At this point Chrysler as a whole is just surviving month by month and the next 10 months will be an uphill battle as well as a critical time. If any of you went to the recent auto show in Detroit you will agree with me that it was just like walking through a Chrysler dealer showroom. Nothing has changed in terms of product and there certainly was no new product to bring in new customers. But, in saying that, if you looked at Honda's display there was no more products on display there then there were at Chrysler. On the other hand, Ford and GM both had much larger displays along with more products to show as well. The Detroit three did not have any concept vehicles on display so it was a much different auto show generally speaking.

My point is simple; we have the same products for the next ten months to get us through difficult times - we have what we have. However, there is some light at the end of our tunnel, as changes will begin to take place later this year as we launch a refreshed version of the mini-van. We will also be launching a number of products with new refreshed interiors later this year which is long overdue. I would suggest this should generate a little more interest in our products. The company is also planning to launch a number of vehicles that have been refreshed and certainly look exciting such as the new Charger which looks more like the seventies version of the car. The new 300 will be another exciting vehicle coming out late in 2010 that is sure to catch the eye of potential customers and bring new life to the dealer showrooms.

There are a number of upgrades in product coming out that should start to generate our return to some stability as a car company and I look forward to the end of 2010. As for our mini-van, we have been getting great reviews and all indications are looking good for the foreseeable future. Our third shift is slated to remain through to 2014 and sales remain excellent at this time. The automotive analysts are indicating more and more people are returning to mini-vans and leaving SUV's. So there are indications the mini-van is re-bouncing much to the surprise of many analyst.

Just recently the Town and Country won the Polk Loyalty Award for the ninth year in a row. This is an award presented to the Company with the vehicle that most people return to purchase repeatedly. This award has been around for 14 years and we have won it 9 of the 14 years, so we are doing something right.

So clearly we are doing fairly well as we start 2010; but as I said previously, the next ten months are critical at which time the road to recovery is expected to begin. It appears 2010 looks much brighter than 2009 as sales are anticipated to increase in the mini-van segment. They are forecasting production of 45 thousand more units this year then we produced in 2009.

Pension Letter

Let me spend a minute on the pension letter you received in the mail recently. We have taken a number of calls at the local from concerned members who don't understand the contents of this letter. This letter in no way should be of concern to you as nothing has changed in regards to pension entitlement. The letter explains that under Bill 162 the company is now allowed to fund

the pension over 10 years, a change from the 5 year plan prior to the change. Why would the government change legislation to allow this to happen? The answer is very simple; the best protection for our pensions is survival of the company.

The government has changed legislation to allow GM and Chrysler to fund over 10 years from 5 years so they can invest in the company to bring them back to profitability and securing their business. Why are we not allowed to vote? This is why the legislation was changed to allow the company to make changes without your consent. What is required of them is to notify all those that have a vested interest in the Chrysler pension, which they have now done with this letter. You may have also noticed the pension was funded at 86% in January of 2008 and dropped to 68% in January 09. This was caused by the financial meltdown and like your private investments, everything fell; but assuming the economy recovers, investments will recover with it.

Elections at WAP

With the recent retirements of a number of representatives there will be election held on Wednesday, February 10th 2010. There will be nominations for five (5) stewards and one (1) committeeperson on January 28th, 2010 at the Local Union Hall located at 1855 Turner Road in Windsor. For further details please see the notice of nominations posted in plant and on the website.

Caesars Windsor Casino

The casino is now entering into a slow time of the year. We just come through a high time and things were busy through the holidays as most of our members were recalled. I expect the casino will start the forced early outs again now that things are slow. We are almost one year away from bargaining but there are some issues that need to be addressed such as the forced early outs which I believe will be a major hurdle to get over. On the other side of the coin I see the company pushing back on the part time ratios like never before.

Some may say it is too early to talk about bargaining but I would suggest we need to understand where this industry is headed in the future. Most insiders will tell you business at the casino has dropped off in large numbers and most do not see those numbers ever returning, which will have a major impact on workers futures. In the next couple of months we will begin to spend more time on preparing for this round of bargaining because we are in for the fight of our life especially in the atmosphere we're in today.

It is very disappointing to see the United Way drive down from last year but this may well be a reflection of the poor times for casino workers. Total pledges were down 14 thousand dollars this year over last year, but the good news was the average pledge per person was up by some 12 dollars to \$113.58 per person. I want to thank all of you for your contributions; you are making a difference in peoples lives. We have been able to secure funds to open an adjustment center for the laid off members at the casino. This is a good tool for laid off members and all are welcome to stop by or call the center to see what they offer. They are located at 250 Windsor Ave. (main floor) or email at cawlocal444workersadjustment@gmail.com

Gate collections for Haiti

Local 444 never ceases to amaze me as our members are incredibly giving people and as I have said many times over, this community would look much different if it were not for this local union. I want to thank all those who have contributed to the relief fund and those that helped make it happen. Over \$15 thousand was raised at our gates thanks to your generosity.

