



THE STRETCH



VOLUME 36, ISSUE NO. 1

TYLER, TEXAS

January, 2006

From The Vice-President's Desk

by Harold Sweat

As we start the new year employees at the Tyler plant are constantly being asked to step up and meet and exceed goals in safety, productivity and waste to reduce cost while producing a higher quality product. I personally would like to take this opportunity to wish each of you a prosperous New Year and to thank each of you for your efforts as we continue to work to reduce accidents and meet the production goals.

The safety of the people is the top concern I have at this time. The accidents as of the writing of this article stands at two OSHA recordables for December. During the Christmas holidays, of the people working in the plant, there were no accidents reported. We have made great progress in the area of safety because of the heightened safety awareness level. I am confident that we will continue to make Goodyear Tyler a safer place to work.

Tire sales and marketing has put pressure on our plant to increase production. This is a result of the great job of the Goodyear North American Sales team as stated in several financial reports. This creates more demand for the tires made here at the Goodyear Tyler plant. Several of the most popular tires needed are built in our plant. Meeting our ticket not only helps insure our future but it also allows the corporate management to predict the flow of the tires from our plant to the customers. When we cannot supply the tires to the customer it is very frustrating. Probably the same frustration felt by each of us when we do not have what it takes to do our job. We have to control the things we can and focus on the positives. (I understand this is hard to do some days). I believe the plant's future is in everyone's thoughts. Billy Taylor says we have a good ticket, one that the Tyler plant can run. I believe that the best chance for success of the Goodyear Tyler plant is to meet our ticket.

Vice President of Manufacturing NAT, Chris Werner was in Tyler on Monday, December 19th. He is concerned the inability to produce tires at the same daily level through the weekend and how this affects the "bottom line on the accounting spread sheet" each month. He spent the day

reviewing the plant processes and taking a tour of the facility. Werner had many positive comments about what he observed in Tyler.

* "Tyler's appearance is outstanding and I'm very impressed. Tyler is by far one of the cleanest and best-organized plants I've seen. I want to thank you for all your hard work in preparing for my visit," Chris Werner.

* "I'm serious about putting more tires in Tyler. There is tire ticket out there. The way for Tyler to gain that additional ticket is to produce and even exceed the ticket that you have now," Werner

* "In Tyler, I observed one of the most engaged groups of associates that I have seen. The question to you is what will you do with such a tremendous asset?" Werner

* "Tyler has many good things going on. The plant has done as much as any NAT plant with Continuous Improvement. I'm very impressed with what I saw on the tour. What I don't see is how what you are doing is affecting the bottom line. Your challenge now will be to find the inefficiencies that are preventing these good efforts from having a positive impact on your financials," Werner

The visit from corporate can be described as very positive. Chris Werner and the other NAT Leadership had nothing but good things to say about the Tyler visit.

"The entire Tyler team, hourly, salary and management alike, got the attention of these important visitors. What we must do now is to take that positive impression and back it up with

results from the factory floor. When we make and exceed our ticket and improve our efficiencies, the plant will secure a future.

Just as Chris Werner is serious about putting tires in Tyler, we are serious about getting tires in Tyler. I want to say thank you to everyone for stepping up to the plate and making this visit the tremendous success that it was. I knew that our associates would do nothing less,"

Billy Taylor-Plant Manager.

In summary our goal is to control the controllables and consistently raise the bar for other plants to follow. Thank you, and Have a Happy and Safe New Year.



Left to right: Local 746L President, Jim Wansley. Vice President of Manufacturing NAT, Chris Werner and Goodyear/Tyler Plant Manager, Billy Taylor.

Pension and Insurance Notes

by Sherrell Brown

PENSION VOTE PASSES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HR 2830 the pension reform bill passed with a margin of 294 to 132 with 7 representatives not voting. This bill drastically reduces the pension benefits the Unions have fought for over the years. The Senate will vote on this issue early in 2006. The bill underwent some modifications, but they were not significant and the bill remains harmful to all pensioners.

This pension legislation represents an enormous attack on the pensions of USW active and retired members and tens of thousands of other workers employed at major manufacturing companies throughout the United States. It is an attempt by the Bush administration and House GOP leaders to undermine negotiated defined benefit pension plans.

At the same time that House GOP leaders are attacking pension benefits for workers and retirees, they have not done anything to the lucrative pensions earned by Members of Congress. Despite the huge federal deficits, Members of Congress would continue to have their pension credits and benefits increase automatically every year.

MINNESOTA LIFE INSURANCE TO BE NEW CARRIER STARTING

JANUARY 1, 2006

I have been receiving calls from concerned retirees who have not received a letter from Minnesota Life. You should have received this letter by now, however there was a data transfer problem between Met Life and Minnesota Life. Some retirees were transferred to Minnesota Life as active employees and therefore did not receive their letter. Minnesota Life is now in the process of correcting this problem and will be sending out new letters. Everyone will roll over to Minnesota Life automatically with the same coverage they had with Met Life. For those who sent in a payment for January to Met-Life you should call Met-Life (1-888-526-8495) and they will refund your money.

Children's Christmas Party Another Successful Event

On Tuesday, December 13th, the Curing/Final Finish/Shipping Area Steering Committee along with Department 911, hosted the annual Christmas Party for Underprivileged Children. The event was a great success thanks to the generosity of TYler associates. The festivities got started at 10:30 am. The kids dined on pizza, cookies and soft drinks. The meal was followed by a few Christmas carols and year even a visit from Santa Claus. This year, two groups were served, Childrens Place Day Care and The North Tyler Day Care. Combined, over 80 preschool children were in attendance. All received an item of clothing as a gift.. Both BCM/Rickey Hall and Plant Manager Billy Taylor greeted the kids and wished them a Merry Christmas.



Ferrell Hardy looks on as the children enjoy their new bikes.

"This is great!", stated Billy Taylor. "I was right where you're sitting not so long ago. I hope you enjoy yourselves and have a merry Christmas. All of you are giving back to us with your smiles and happiness," said Taylor as he addressed the children. "This is my second year to be a part of this special event," stated Rickey Hall. "It's an honor to have you here and I hope that you have a wonderful holiday," Hall concluded. The organizers would like to extend a big "Thank You" to all those that faithfully support this effort every year. Last, but not least, thanks once again to 514's Tommy Butcher who came out to play Santa and pass out gifts.



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December 12, 2005 the SOAR members attended their annual Christmas Party held at the John Nash Activity Center at 6:00 PM. The members had a great time. The meal was delicious and gifts were exchanged. Special treat was to have President Eugene Hulsey being able to attend the Christmas Party after his brain surgery, radiation, and chemo.

Micky and Chuck Lamberth had a Christmas Party at their home in Palestine, December 16th. SOAR members were invited. The members brought a dish and exchanged gifts. The most popular gift among the men was a beautiful pocket knife. Playing a game with the gifts, who was the lucky one to get the knife? Think Dino



STEELWORKERS ORGANIZATION OF ACTIVE RETIREES

SOAR Organization and the members are to bring vegetables and desserts. Tommie, is it time for one of your delicious sweet potato pies?

really did want the knife. The members attending had a great time and appreciate the Lamberths for hosting a party for them.

February will be the annual Retirees Banquet. Information will be given in the February Stretch.

Continue to pray for President Eugene Hulsey and Tennie. It is wonderful to see him during the Christmas Holidays. The January meeting will be held at the John Nash Activity Center on January 9th, 6:00 PM. The meat will be provided by the

Ladies Auxiliary

December 13, the Ladies Auxiliary had their Christmas Party at the home of Jimmy and Linda Bateman. The ladies had a wonderful time sharing Christmas stories and playing games. The meal was great and the ladies thank Linda for hosting their party. Rumor was that Jimmie did not go play golf, but played 42 with some of the guys. Jimmie who won that night?

Pray for LaJoy Bailey's family. LaJoy passed away on December 19th.

We hope each of you had a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year. Continue to remember President Eugene Hulsey, our Troops, and our country.



Picture above: S.O.A.R. Members Shelley King, Danny Dike, and Angie Stephens at the Christmas Party at the Lamberths home in Palestine.

Distinguished Youth of Texas

Jack and Carol Swanson's granddaughter, Cassity Egan, was recognized in Austin Sunday for Distinguished Youth of Texas. Three thousand letters of recommendation were mailed by teachers, churches, Girl Scouts, recommending outstanding Scholastic and Good Students. Ten year old Cassity was one of the 95 selected for grades 5-7. Eighty three were selected for grades 2-4. Cassity is a fifth grade student from Como-Pickton Elementary. The trip was very educational for all the girls attending, and Cassity had a great time meeting new friends. Carol and her daughter, Teresa Wilkins, were able to have quality time being together during the weekend while in Austin. Of course, if you know Carol, she had time for shopping. Ha.

Pictures below left to right, 1st picture: Larry VanDeman, Ronald Palmer, Smoky Willis and Jack Swanson string Christmas along the guard rail at the union hall. Center picture: Freddie Young (with rake) and Joe Morgan clean up around the hall. Last picture: Virginia Pike (left) and Carol Swanson decorate the Christmas Tree in the union hall.

Thank you to all the S.O.A.R. members who worked so hard to decorate the union hall for Chirstmas.



A LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Dear Mr. Wansley,

I am writing to express my appreciation for the tremendous support and representation my family received from Local 746's benefits representative, Mr. Sherrell Brown. I got your name and address from Mr. Rex Woods.

My father is Donald "Bull" Reel, and he worked at Kelly-Springfield's Tyler plant for about 30 years – he paid his dues, worked for the union on numerous issues, suffered through strikes and threats of them, and always remained a faithful supporter of *his* Union. He often expressed complete faith in *his* Union – and in recent years in Mr. Brown in particular – to step in and help my mother and our family should something ever happen to him. He often told my mother that if something happened to him, she should "just call Sherrell and he'll help you get everything taken care of."

Well, in January 2004 something did happen. My father had a massive and debilitating stroke. He was in ICU for a week, and in the hospital for about a month. My mother called Mr. Brown the first day after the stroke, and we met with him that first week to understand the insurance plan's rules, provisions and limitations. He researched questions for us and was very prompt and complete in responding to us.

In February 2004, my father moved into skilled nursing / rehabilitation facility for an attempt at working back to a condition that would allow him to return home. Mr. Brown explained the rules of what the insurance and Medicare would pay and advised us on which skilled nursing facilities and doctors had good reputations among the Union members' experience. This was of course extremely helpful since we had little experience with any of this stuff before that very moment.

Weeks turned into months and then into more than a year. Around May 2005, my mother was informed by the nursing facility that the insurance company had decided to stop paying for my father's care retroactively back to November 2004. By their books, we instantly owed about \$20,000. Of course we found this arbitrary and exceptionally unfair. (One thing I learned is that because this is a company-funded plan, the Texas Board of Insurance has no jurisdiction over Goodyear's plan or the decisions made on its behalf.) There was also great debate, and no clear data, about who was at fault for the mix-up leading to the retroactive decision – the insur-

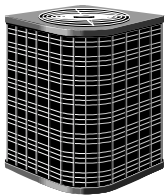
ance company or the skilled nursing facility. Without clear fault, we had a major challenge ahead of us in establishing whether the insurance company or the nursing facility should accept the burden of the bills, and my mother would ultimately have to pay for someone else's mistakes.

Among many resources we leveraged, we called on Mr. Brown to intercede with the insurance company and with the nursing facility. I wrote him a letter and explained that this was *the moment* on which my father had bet his most of his career – this was why he had paid those dues all those years. This was *the moment* where we would find out if almost forty years' worth of trust and faith in *his* Union were well-placed. In the moment my family needed Daddy's Union the most, Mr. Brown stepped in, stepped up, and delivered – my father would be pleased and proud of how well his Union met the challenge in his family's time of need.

Mr. Brown negotiated with the nursing facility and with the insurance company on our behalf. He met with executives of both firms. Some of these people, I could not even get to take my calls – we were so frustrated and angry at others that we could not negotiate effectively. In the end, Mr. Brown developed and filed an extensive ERISA appeal on our behalf and tracked it to a successful judgment in our favor. We did not even know how to spell "ERISA" or that it was an option – without Mr. Brown's involvement, we would have had to somehow pay that \$20,000 that we did not actually owe. In the end, we didn't have to pay that money and the relief granted to my Mother was significant.

So, thank you for maintaining an organization wherein this kind of tremendous support can, and clearly does, occur. Please formally – and publicly – thank Mr. Brown for us however your organization deems appropriate. I have thanked him a couple of times now, and he says it is just his job – he does his job awfully well. I have copied Mr. Wyatt of *The Stretch* in hope that he will include some part or paraphrase of this letter to publicly acknowledge Mr. Brown's fine work but also to help your membership understand the peace of mind their dues today may purchase for their families years after they retire – indeed at the point where they are helpless themselves.

Sincerely,
John S. Reel



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Small Town Girl's Dream Comes True

Reprinted from the Chandler and Brownsboro Statesman

Brownsboro High School graduate Samandra Young knows how to make dreams come true. You work very hard at it, and never give up.

Samandra is the granddaughter of **Freddie and Helen Young** and grew up in Chandler, Texas. During her sophomore year at Brownsboro High School she became a member of the Golden Girls Drill Team. She loved performing so much that during her senior year she decided to audition for the Kilgore College Rangerettes, which she was a member of for two years (the allotted time to be a Rangerette).

Enjoying the bond she had with her fellow team members, Samandra knew it was something she did not want to come to an end. Therefore, she began to dream of becoming something even bigger. A Radio City Rockette!

In 1994, Radio City began to branch their Christmas Spectacular show to other cities besides New York, for those who could not travel to New York City. Thus began

Christmas Across America. One such city was Grand Prairie, Texas.

While Samandra was a sophomore at Kilgore College, she went to see the Radio City Christmas Spectacular in Grand Prairie and decided this was definitely what she wanted to pursue.

On January 11, 2003, Samandra attended a three hour Rockette Experience Workshop held in Carrollton, Texas to learn what is required during a Rockette audition.

In June 2003, a Rockette Summer Intensive was offered at the University of Texas in Austin. Samandra attended the week-long



Samandra Young

seminar to learn the precision of becoming a Rockette.

Once she had the Rockette education, she found the work and patience had just begun. Samandra attended several auditions in Chicago, New York and Los Angeles, along with about 1,500 other hopefuls, when on October 5, 2005 she received the call she had hoped for - the call of congratulations from Radio City Music Hall. They informed her that she would be joining another 19 Rockettes on the Chicago line.

Rehearsals began right away for the 2005 Radio City Music Ball Christmas Spectacular and the performances at Rosemont Theatre in Chicago began in November and will run through December 24.

The Rockettes perform two daily shows Tuesday through Friday, three shows on Saturday, two on Sunday, and they take Monday off.

The Rockettes have been performing two of the same acts since 1933 when the Rockettes were organized, one is the Wooden Soldier

March, and the live Nativity scene grand finale which includes, along with the Rockettes, actors, three camels, two sheep and one donkey on stage.

Samandra's parents, Sam and Suzanna Young, of Chandler and her fiancé, Shaun Nail, of The Woodlands, all attended her first performances over the Thanksgiving holidays

With the Chicago show running through Christmas Eve, there will be several more friends and relatives in attendance before the show closes for the season.

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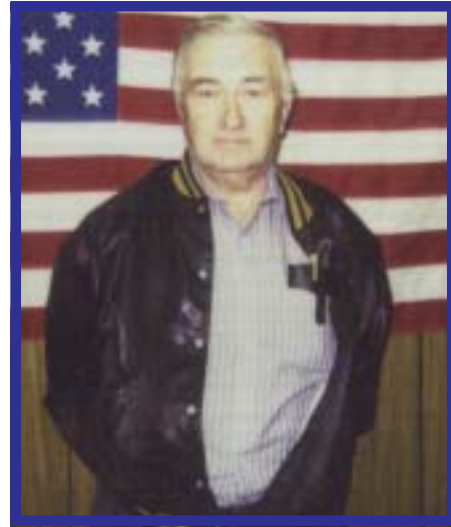
"This is great!", stated Billy Taylor. "I was right where you're sitting not so long ago. I hope you enjoy yourselves and have a merry Christmas. All of you are giving back to us with your smiles and happiness," said Taylor as he addressed the children. "This is my second year to be a part of this special event," stated Rickey Hall. "It's an honor to have you here and I hope that you have a wonderful holiday," Hall concluded. The organizers would like to extend a big "Thank You" to all those that faithfully support this effort every year. Last, but not least, thanks once again to 514's Tommy Butcher who came out to play Santa and pass out gifts.

Goodyear/Tyler New Hires



On Monday, November 28th, six new hires started their careers with Goodyear/Tyler. They are: (left to right) Lawrence Hawkins, Matt Peavy, Brad Weber, Addy Little, Shawn Smith and Tamara Mathis. They spent the first 3 days in the orientation process and then on Wednesday afternoon got a tour of the plant. They were turned over to their respective PDIs on Thursday morning.

Obituary



D.D. "Darius" Jones died on December 5th. He was 79 years old. Darius retired on March 1st 1994. His last job was in Dept. 514.

JANUARY RETIREES



Top row, left to right: Gene Hill, 210. Oscar Hudgins, 431. Becky Johns, 515. Dave King, 431.

Second row: Sid Shofner, 119. Delman Parmer, 431. Ray Web, 705.

Place an Ad In The Stretch!

The Stretch now has an ad section. The ads from members and retirees of Local 746L will be free for 3 lines in a column like in this article and \$5 a line after that. The ads must be for legal items, be in good taste and have a name and phone number where the information can be verified. The editor and E-Board have final approval on all ads and retain the right to refuse any ad. The ads that run for longer than one month will have to be resubmitted each month.

The Stretch is also taking advertisements from businesses or individuals for a price to help off-set the cost of printing. Again the ads must be for legal items, be in good taste and must be paid for in advance. The Stretch can not

accept ads from the travel industry, insurance companies or financial institutions due to postal regulations. All ads must be received by the 20th of the month to be put in the following month's Stretch. The pricing will be:

1/8 page	\$25.00	1/4 page	\$50.00
1 half page	\$100.00	Full Page	\$200.00

Send ads by e-mail to:

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Goodyear to own 100% of South Pacific Tyres

Goodyear has reached an agreement in principle on the final terms to acquire Ansell Limited's interest in their South Pacific Tyres (SPT) joint ventures, pending government and other approvals.

Goodyear will pay its partner approximately \$40 million for its 50 percent ownership of the tire manufacturer and marketer with operations in Australia and New Zealand. Goodyear will also repay approximately \$50 million of outstanding loans from Ansell to SPT.

In addition to strengthening Goodyear's position in these countries, the move, according to Pierre Cohade, president of Goodyear's Asia/Pacific business unit, enhances its flexibility and earnings growth prospects in the region.

"We are excited to own 100 percent of SPT in Australia and New Zealand and to have a leadership position in these important markets," said Cohade. "SPT, under the leadership of CEO Joe Copeland, is making excellent progress in its turnaround."

Cohade said this acquisition will build on Goodyear's momentum in the Asia/Pacific region and "strengthens us in terms of leadership, distribution and brand strength, key strategic drivers for our business globally."

Copeland added, "We see exciting opportunities for Goodyear in this market – both for our associates, our suppliers, our customers and of course, our consumers. Being owned 100 percent by Goodyear will be a tremendous benefit to us and clearly will further enhance our overall strategy and plans to continue to turnaround our performance."

Formed in 1987, SPT is the leading tiremaker in Australia and New Zealand. It has 4,000 associates and annual sales of more than \$700 million. Its results have been consolidated with those of Goodyear's Asia/Pacific region since January 2004.

Young Hunters



Chase (far left) and Austin (left) Bonner are the sons of David Bonner, Dept 705 ARF Tire Builder, and grandsons of Kelly salaried-tiree, Pat Bonner.

On a recent hunting trip to El Dorado, Texas Chase killed a 5 point buck, and Austin killed an 8 point buck.

This was the second deer for both boys.

Agreement Reached with Freeport Plant

United Steelworkers Local 745 Membership Voted to approve the proposed agreement for Freeport plant with Titan International, Inc. Goodyear announced the proposed sale of its North American farm tire division on February 28, 2005. Since that time, Local 745 has participated in well-coordinated and complex negotiations with representatives of Titan, Goodyear, the United Steelworkers International Union, the Steelworkers Pension Trust, Steelworkers Local Union and a variety of benefit plan administrators to develop a weave of interlocking protections for employees of the Freeport plant.

Under the terms of the formal Agreements covering both the Freeport plant and Titan's Des Moines, IA facility, memberships of Local Union No. 745 and Local Union No. 164 (representing the Des Moines Titan tire plant) must each approve the terms of the proposed contracts at these locations before the sale can be finalized. Elections were held at both locations today, and both proposed contracts were approved by local union membership. The Union has approved the proposed sale. The anticipated sale date will be January 1, 2006, which will begin the terms of the new contracts for each location.

A New Blimp is Born

In just two-and-a-half hours on a Wednesday morning in December, a Goodyear blimp was given its first full breath of life – 184,000 cubic feet of helium.

Administering that breath from 11 helium-filled tanks aboard a semi-truck to the unnamed airship was Scott Babbo, construction and airship base superintendent, who described the “turning of the valve” as giving birth to Goodyear's newest aerial ambassador.

Looking on in the 16-degree (Fahrenheit) Wingfoot Lake hangar for the early-morning milestone were special guests, such as an *Akron Beacon Journal* reporter and photographer, a children's book author, and more than 20 airship crewmen who periodically adjusted the envelope's restraining net, allowing it to inflate “just right.”

“We have to be very careful how we inflate the blimp in order to maintain helium purity and an even shape,” Babbo said. “All air must be evacuated prior to helium inflation. A vacuum attached at the rear end of the envelope operated until there was a flow of helium from the front end.”

Additionally, a large net and hundreds of sandbags were used to not only keep the inflating envelope near the ground, but to regulate the amount of tension on the bag so it filled evenly.

“We essentially go from a huge rubber pancake to a cylinder that's 192 feet long and almost 60 feet tall. This drastic growth in a short period of time requires a close watch,” he said.

An hour later, crews prepared to fill the remaining 18,000 cubic feet of space inside the envelope's ballonets with air by installing four air valves and two air scoops.

According to Ron Dunay, airship repair station manger, valves and scoops control the airship's pressure, which is adjusted around the clock based on the expanding and contracting of the helium due to changes in temperate and atmospheric pressure.

Specifically, air scoops take air discharged from the propeller back up to fill the ballonets when needed. An electric blower provides air to the air scoops when the engines are at idle and the ship is not flying.

Construction of this soon-to-be Pompano Beach, Fla.-based airship is on schedule to be launched in the spring of 2006. Crews will be attaching the gondola and fins this week and painting in early January.

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