

## Want to keep \$660 in YOUR bank account?



### Wouldn't it be sweet to get a discount that let you keep \$660 in your bank account?

That can happen – IF you DO NOT use any tobacco products. You can qualify for a tobacco-free discount when you update your medical insurance records during open enrollment, which begins April 22. This tobacco-free discount will save non-smokers \$12.69 per paycheck (or \$660 a year) on their medical premiums starting July 1.

**BUT, BUT, BUT!...** Each Steelworker who is tobacco-free **MUST** declare their tobacco-use status to receive the discount worth \$660 a year. Even if you are a non-smoker, if you **DON'T** declared your tobacco-status, your medical premium will go up and your paycheck will be smaller starting July 1. **If you are a tobacco-user, you DO NOT need to declare your status as a smoker, but know that an additional \$12. 69 will be deducted per paycheck beginning July 1.**

To declare your tobacco-use status starting April 22, you need to access your UPoint account from [www.hiibenefits.com](http://www.hiibenefits.com) or call the Huntington Ingalls Benefits Center (HIBC) at 1-877-216-3222. You need your UPoint password first, though, to declare that you are tobacco-free. It only takes **10 MINUTES** or less to update your status. So avoid the stress; get your password **NOW!**

A NNS benefits representative will be at the union hall from 12 noon to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 16th, to help Local 8888 members get their UPoint passwords. If you need help setting up your UPoint password to update your status starting April 22, stop by the union hall or look for additional dates and locations where benefits representatives can help you.



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**Office**

4306 Huntington Avenue, Newport News, Virginia 23607  
 Phone: 247-5291 / Fax: 247-0321  
 Voyager E-mail: voyager@uswa.hrcoxmail.com  
**Office Hours:** Daily 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**United Steelworkers AFL-CIO-CLC**

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**Office:** Five Gateway Center, Pittsburgh, PA 15222



**Editor -** Gregg Hucks, X36  
 Erica Brinson, X36, Staff Member

**Contributing Staff**  
 Committee Chairpersons

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**Deadline Reminder:**  
 Please remember that all information, articles and material to be included in the next "Voyager" must be delivered in writing to the Union Hall or emailed by February 27, 2019. "The Voyager" email address is: [voyager@uswa.hrcoxmail.com](mailto:voyager@uswa.hrcoxmail.com)



**From the President's Desk**

Greetings brothers and sisters of USW Local 8888. I know you are ready for this winter weather to end. It has certainly been cold and wet the last few months. By the time this edition of the Voyager is published and circulated, some big changes in how the employer handles workers compensation claims will be in effect.

Beginning April 1, 2019, any union member receiving workers compensation benefits will experience a change in the individuals processing their benefits, and presumably, how those benefits are processed. For as long as anyone in the Union can remember, the various entities leading up to Huntington Ingalls Newport News Shipbuilding have been self-insured for workers compensation benefits and have self-administered the workers compensation benefits.

Self-insured means that the employer pays the workers compensation benefits out of its own profits rather than purchasing a workers comp policy similar to when you purchase an automobile policy. Self-administering the workers compensation benefits means that the employer hires a staff to review workers compensation claims and decides when to pay benefits. The other option is for the employer to hire a third-party administrator to handle the workers compensation claims.

Please remember, no matter what the new workers compensation department tells you, under the Longshore and Harbor Workers Compensation Act:

- You are entitled to a free choice of physician - you do not have to choose off the employer's panel of physicians.
- You have thirty days to report your injury- although the sooner you report your injury the better so as to retain evidence and insure memories are fresh when recording dates and descriptions.

*President's Desk con't on pg 3*



# Financial Secretary's Report

Verna Chamberliss, X42, Chair

## \*\*IMPORTANT\*\*

Union members must notify the Union to terminate coverage. If you terminate your membership and/or employment, retire, become salaried, go out on Sick/Accident/ disability or no longer want Dental/Aflac coverage.



Greetings brothers and sisters

February 18th-22nd I, along with a few others, was given the opportunity to attend a Black Labor Week conference in Gary, Indiana. It was a wonderful experience and I believe I can speak for everyone when I say we learned a lot! Not only did I learn a lot, but it also inspired me to want to do more here at our local and in our community. However, I can't do this alone. I NEED YOUR HELP! We have our monthly meetings at 2pm (an hour before our membership meeting) every 3rd Saturday at the union hall. Bring all your ideas and enthusiasm so we can make this work! WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER! WE ARE STEEL-WORKER STRONG!

Herbie Porter, Chair

*President's Desk con't from pg 2*

You have one year to file a claim with the Department of Labor. The employer filing a First Report of Injury with the Department of Labor is not sufficient. You have an independent duty to file a claim with the Department of Labor within one year. This one-year time period can be extended for various reasons. If you are concerned that you did not file your claim within one year, consult with a lawyer to see if one of the exceptions applies to your situation.

Now, I want to speak on something that is very important to all of the hourly workers here at Newport News. Annual Enrollment begins April 22, 2019, and you have until June 30, 2019 to make sure your tobacco status is updated. Please be aware that default medical status for all of us is as a smoker. Therefore, you must updated your own record to attest that you are not a tobacco user. If you are a non-tobacco user but you do not change your status, beginning July 1, 2019, you will pay an increase in your healthcare premium of \$12.69 per week (or \$660 per year). Please make sure you do your tobacco attestation and please make sure you have your phone PIN to access your account when calling the benefits center.

This is also a great opportunity for you to update any benefit changes you want to go into effect July 1, 2019, and especially check your beneficiary designation. You can start now if you do not have a phone PIN or an on-line password. A company benefits representative will be at the union hall on Saturday March 16, 2019, from 12 noon to 2:00 pm to answer questions. Look for more published information in the near future.

Please call or come by to see me at the union hall – 757-247-5291.

Charles Spivey



*Honoring the accomplishments of women.*

## **Voter Registration Drive Set to Kick Off 8888 Powers Up for Key Elections in '19 and '20**

The time is ripe for Local 8888 to step up its game in the political arena, and union leadership is answering the Call to Action. Local 8888 President Charles Spivey announced the union is launching its first Political Empowerment Program (PEP) to register, educate and turnout more union voters in important elections later this year and in 2020. The first act of empowerment took place March 7, when 26 union members participated in a Registrar training class. Upon completion, they were certified to register their co-workers and others to vote. The session was conducted by Garry Ellis, voter registration coordinator and Senior registrar liaison for the Virginia Department of Elections.

President Spivey, who tapped Mike Lee (X36) to coordinate the local's Political Empowerment Program, said the newly certified registration volunteers will anchor the union's first Voter Registration Drive, which will begin this spring. "If we want politicians to take us seriously in the shipyard, then we've got to get their attention in the political arena. That starts by tapping the potential power within our grasp – the awesome voting strength of 10,000 Steelworkers."

Spivey, who met Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi in Washington last October, said, "The stakes are so high. Our right to vote is under attack across the nation. Here, too, in Virginia, we must confront forces of darkness, in both suits and sheets, who will do everything they can to strip or dilute our power at the polls. But as long as I am leading the Steelworkers in the shipyard, exercising and protecting our

right to vote will always be a top priority." Spivey said voter applications will be available at the union hall and at other Local 8888 events. Certified registration volunteers also will be available to assist folks new to registering and members who need help updating their residency status.



Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

My name is Chan Lewis and I have been appointed Chairman of Organizing by President Spivey. He has asked me to help raise our membership numbers by the next contract. My goal is to have a 100% membership by 2021.

My task and personal experience, is to get potential members to understand the power of negotiating for favorable benefits through a strong contract.

I will explain all of the wonderful and bountiful things we could acquire if we have 100% membership. We all need to understand that we can achieve better wage increases, make changes to our PT and yes Veterans, we can make great efforts to obtain Veterans day as a paid holiday. However, each and every hourly worker must be on the same page.

It is imperative that we all understand the economic impact the contract play in our lives. For example, wages, vacation, paid holidays, pensions, medical and night shift differential. These are all things negotiated in the contract that could be so much better if we all were members of our Union.

Those of us who are already members, understand what we have accomplished and how much better things will be when we all become union members. Those of you who have not yet joined, we will do everything in our power to show you the importance of being a member in our Union.

It will be a glorious day when we can say that USW Local 8888 has 100% membership.

Let's Get Busy!!

Chan





**MARCH BIRTHDAYS**

Erica M. Brinson, X36  
Juan Giles, X33  
Charlene Jones, X32  
Dennis T. Dedmon, X32  
Lavone Sessoms, 014

# Announcements

If you want your marriage anniversaries, any special announcements, birthdays, births, graduations, etc, you have to now submit them to the Voyager.



**IN MEMORIAM**

Shirley M. Spratley, X31  
Kenneth Sawyer, X33  
Clyde Moody, X18, former executive board member.

**CONDOLENCES:**

Donald Newsome, X18, loss of brother.  
Crystal Deans, X33, loss of sister.  
Janice Sawyer, loss of husband.

United Steelworkers  
Local 8888  
4306 Huntington Avenue  
Newport News, VA 23607

**Annual Gospel Concert  
Sunday April 14, 2019  
3p.m.-6p.m.**

**“ Refreshments will be Severed”**

**Michael Lee, X36, Special Events  
Chair.**

**IMPORTANT  
ANNOUNCEMENT!**

Open Enrollment Free Assistance  
March 16th, 12 -2pm, at the Union Hall

There is a very important new twist to open enrollment for medical insurance, which starts April 22.

This year, every steelworker in the yard must obtain a UPoint password to access your medical information, specifically to declare that you are tobacco-free if you are a nonsmoker. A company benefits representative will be at the Local 8888 union hall from 12 noon to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 16th, to help Local 8888 members get their UPoint passwords. If you need help setting up your UPoint password to update your tobacco-use status, stop by the union hall. It only takes 10 MINUTES and can save you \$660.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 2019  
MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP  
MEETING  
STARTS 3:00 P.M.**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2019  
MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP  
MEETING  
3:00 P.M.**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2019  
2:00 P.M.  
WOMEN OF STEEL**





## Political Action Committee

**Gene E. Magruder, PAC Chair**

This year Virginia will face an election of all 140 House and Senate seats in the General Assembly. The unions each year get the politicians on record as to what they believe, in reference to workers rights. It might range from safety on the job to our workers compensation system. It might be a union's right to bargain or a right for the employee to have a union. This coming year is important because with a change of one seat in each chamber, individuals that proclaim their allegiance to union issues have an opportunity to actually pass legislation for us in the General Assembly. This will be a welcome change. It will be easier for workers to achieve a collective bargaining agreement which each of us enjoy.

If you are under the workers compensation system you know it has many flaws and is in need for an update. The union has been speaking to our law firms that cover such items and we will be presenting to our legislators many changes we would like in the laws. In the past we have had a hard time even asking for a 5 dollar a week increase in compensation, because pro labor candidates were not in charge. I look forward to more improvements if we win in November.

I know many of us vote in the shipyard. I also know the young do not vote in the numbers that our older workers vote. I want to encourage them to experience having a say in the future. Just try it once, stop by for five minutes and cast your vote. Many of you have witnessed your parents, and families vote. They saw a reason; they trudged in many areas miles to vote. They felt that if they had no say in anything else in life, they had a say in a hope that their future, and yours would somehow be better. That is what happened at the shipyard in 1979 in the vote to be represented by the United Steelworkers, your parents decided they would have a say in their future. They did not expect a perfect union. Nor do they expect perfect politicians but they just knew they were voting for a brighter future and they were right.

## Workers' Compensation Committee

### Been Injured on the Job?

.... **Report** any injury to your Supervisor.

.... **Obtain a Clinic Pass** from your Supervisor so you can **report the injury** and seek medical treatment.

.... **Pick your own doctor** to treat you under federal law, you are allowed to do so.

.... **Come** to the Union Hall to **file a claim** to protect your compensation rights and bring all paper work concerning your injury.

.... **Under federal law you only have one (1) year from the injury date to file your claim. Also, when you file your claim at the Union Hall, please bring all information and paperwork concerning your injury with you to file your claim. So, please come to the Union Hall promptly.**

Questions?? Come by the Union Hall on Thursday of each week at 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., or call (757) 247-5291 ext. 127.

## Safety & Health Committee

Your Safety and Health Committee would like you to get in touch if you have any concerns in the area you are working or if you see a problem let us know. We are here to help make the shipyard a safer place for us all to work. There are few ways to reach us leave a message at (757) 247-5291 Ext.129 or E-mail us at [safety8888@uswa.hrcxmail.com](mailto:safety8888@uswa.hrcxmail.com). If you have an urgent safety problem let your foremen know, so they can get in contact with Health and Safety as well as your Health and Safety rep for local 8888. We look forward to hearing from you and if there is an area we should visit just let us know where to go.

As always have a great time everyday

Learn as much as you can

And for goodness sake always be safe.

Local 8888 Health and Safety Committee



THE LAW FIRM OF  
Charlene A. Moring, P.C.

ATTORNEY & COUNSELOR AT LAW



Left front: Chernat Newsome (*formerly of Wardell Orthopaedics*), Left rear: Andrea Rouse  
Right front: Taliah Moring, Right rear: Cynthia Hannah  
Center: Charlene A. Moring Esq,

Charlene and her staff look forward to serving  
the shipyard and surrounding community with experience, compassion  
and transparency in their fight for  
Workers Compensation and Social Security Disability

Offices located: Southside-125 St. Paul's Blvd, Ste 301, Norfolk, VA 23510

Peninsula- 2600 Washington Ave, Ste 1008, Newport News, VA 23607

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**425 Monticello Avenue Norfolk, Virginia 23510**

**4302 Huntington Avenue Newport News, Virginia 23607**

**757-622-8100**

**757-380-8100**

**Charles S. Montagna  
Gregory E. Camden  
Jon J. Montagna\*\***

**John H. Klein  
Lance A. Jackson  
Anthony L. Montagna, III**



**Gloria Cooper-Paralegal**

\*\*Also licensed in Washington DC

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