

## President's Message April 20, 2008

I am happy to report that our brothers and sisters of the AFSCME 3357 have been working with dedication and creativity to advance the interests of the Union. A brief state of the Union address is in order as we approach contract negotiations and ongoing staffing adjustments.

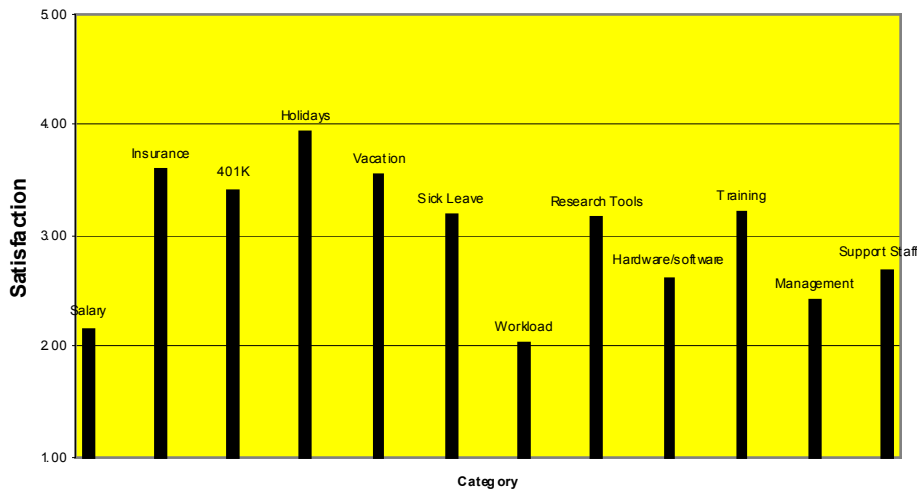
The current 2004-2008 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) is scheduled to expire in June. At this time, negotiations for a new CBA will begin in Detroit on Saturday, May 31, 2008. The negotiation committee will consist of Mike Forbes (President, KY), Steve Beres (Vice President, OH), Heather Rasmussen (Secretary, WI) and Roger White (Grievance Chair, TX).



Please keep all of the participants in your thoughts as we move forward to a just and fair agreement.

Thank you for completing and returning the pre-negotiation Questionnaires. The negotiations committee has carefully reviewed all of the responses. Rest assured that we share your interests and concerns and take them very seriously. A graphical summary of satisfaction levels is depicted below. We have also summarized and organized your comments for careful consideration and use during bargaining process.

Overall Satisfaction (5 = Extremely Satisfied, 4 = Very Satisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 2 = Very Dissatisfied, 1 = Extremely Dissatisfied)



As many are aware, the number of attorneys serving in the Legal Services Plan (LSP) has diminished along with contractions in the domestic auto industry. Current membership in the Local 3357 is 103 members and consists of all LSP attorneys (except for those attorneys in Michigan). This is a reduction from 150 attorneys represented only a short time ago. The attorneys represented by the Michigan bargaining unit have also experienced significant reductions according to their President, Kim Holihan. In short, there has been a reduction in force of about one-third as paralleled by members of the U.A.W.

With the staff reductions of course come obstacles. However, it is our goal to use these obstacles to create opportunities for positive change. We have met already met and transformed many obstacles into opportunities. Examples include: 1) responding to decreasing revenues; 2) handling broadening areas of practice; 3) resolving layoff/recall issues; and, 4) dealing with client satisfaction/discipline issues.

Although Local 3357 revenues are down, efficiencies are up. Representatives from all over the country are now able to meet weekly using online video, voice and email technology at little or no cost. Communications are faster, better and at lower cost than ever before. Union funds are held in interest bearing accounts to maximize returns. Travel and hotel expenses are carefully scrutinized online to maintain the lowest possible costs. So, despite declining dues revenues administrative function remains strong. We pledge to continue to look for new and innovative ways to be faithful stewards of your dues.

Staff reductions result in the need for attorneys to cover a broader range of practice areas. This challenge has been met in part as the Union has partnered with the LSP to obtain timely and economical online training programs for changing case responsibility roles. Recent trainings using Microsoft Live Meeting have received good reviews for the growing Bankruptcy and Foreclosure practice areas. The Local has actively addressed the concerns of its members feeling the pressure to practice law in jurisdictions where they are unlicensed. These pressures are being carefully monitored and adjusted. As a result, the Union and the LSP have partnered to reallocate cases, to obtain the assistance of Managing Attorneys as never before and to obtain new admissions as necessary.

The Local continues to stand firm for the rights of its members. The Local is actively addressing client complaints/disciplinary actions against members by working with members and management to reasonably resolve conflicts. The Local has also been proactive to preserve COBRA and other CBA benefits of laid off members as well as restoring benefits and accruals to recalled members.

The Union and LSP will no doubt face more obstacles. Our objective is to mine these obstacles for opportunities and become stronger. We will continue to refine efficiencies, leverage strengths and partner with each other to reach higher personal goals and provide quality results for our clients.

Best regards,

Mike Forbes