

**Report of the Judges  
International Association of Machinists  
Annual Newsletter and Website Competition**

One of the most startling facts about the 21<sup>st</sup> Century American workplace is the realization that it is rapidly becoming a virtual “minimal rights zone” for all but the lucky minority of the workforce with union representation rights.

Yes, there are federal, state and local laws and ordinances that establish legal rights to job safety, freedom from discrimination and minimum wage requirements (and even those legal rights are the product of union lobbying work). There is some regulation of the basic workweek and requirements for periodic break periods. However, most of the restrictions on employer behavior have been consistently weakened and diluted by ineffectual enforcement to the point that few workers can realistically count on them for reliable protection.

Conceptually, America still maintains that “all persons are created equal,” but as our laws have evolved, corporations and employers have come to enjoy “super-equality” over those they employ. Without union representation the concept of “at will” employment pertains.

For too many Americans, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights—guarantees of free speech, freedom from unwarranted search and seizure, the right of privacy and free association—apply for 16 hours a day, until they enter the workplace.

Think about it—for as many as 132 million jobholders in America, interpersonal communications can be and often are proscribed. In too many workplaces, the employer’s control extends even to when, if and how long a worker may use the bathroom. The expectation of employment security is practically nil. The employer, not the worker, dictates when, where, how, how long and with whom work will be performed. Yes, we’ve come a long way.

If asked, most workers with union representation would say that their contract is the most significant benefit they derive in return for their dues. And, that’s probably true, but ranking right near the top of the list of significant benefits a union provides is communication and information, as supplied by union publications and related channels of communication, i.e. websites, e-mails, press releases, pamphlets, videos.

Where else can working families go to get straight information about wages, working conditions—and above all—their rights than the union? What better sources are there

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that provide working families with the knowledge and the tools to protect themselves in the economic jungle?

That's a heavy responsibility for union communicators at the district and local lodge levels. Fortunately, many unions make that task a little easier by providing resources and training for their communicators to instruct them on ways to get information out, get it right and make the message effective. Few unions provide as much assistance to their communicators as does the IAM.

IAM's decision to formalize and elevate the communication process by establishing the position of "communicator" within each district and local lodge is emblematic of the premium this union places on effective communications.

IAM's support for communications has paid significant dividends for the union in terms of solidarity and a veritable treasure of talent among those individuals who are doing the "heavy lifting" by producing and maintaining publications and websites at the districts and local lodges.

Against a backdrop of oppression and attack by the Bush Administration, it is particularly important to extend congratulations and thanks to those union activists who continue to work getting labor's message out to members and their families. This is particularly important work, and this group of communicators does that work remarkably well. The following list spotlights the best of this corps and we salute them.

Signed:

### **Newsletter Judges**

**Phil Dine, Labor Reporter, St. Louis Post Dispatch**

**Donna Jablonski, Director of Publications, AFL-CIO**

**Michelle Amber, Reporter, Daily Labor Report, Bureau of National Affairs**

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*Judges met on Friday, November 17<sup>th</sup> to review the entries, the following are their selections:*

#### **IAM Newsletter Contest Results**

##### **Best Feature, Local Lodges**

First Place: Local Lodge 701, Countryside, IL; News and Views; Sam Cicinelli and Bob Lessmann, editors

“Paid to be Your Friend: Persuader Hired by Employers in Organizing Campaigns”—Genuine feature describing the latest wrinkle in the union-buster industry, i.e.—paid “persuaders” who roam shop floors, take workers out to lunch and otherwise get chummy with workers to campaign against union representation prior to an NLRB election. Solid topic, treatment is informative and compelling.

Second Place: Local 1833 Report, Bloomington, MN, Vicki Beebe, editor; Local 1833 Member Creates a Way to Honor Fallen Soldiers

Spotlights the motivation and creativity of Northwest Airlines Equipment Servicer Eric Bresvold who marshaled his co-workers to design and build a special cargo cart to handle the caskets holding fallen military personnel shipped from overseas for burial. The story is a tribute to the workers and the teamwork they developed to see the plan through. Inspiring.

Third Place: Local Lodge 66 Badger Lodge News, Milwaukee, WI, Doug Curler Editor Bay View in the 1886 Fight for the Eight-Hour Day

Reminds readers of the role workers in Milwaukee and the nearby village of Bay View played in securing the eight-hour day more than 120 years ago. The Bay View Uprising, overshadowed by the infamous Haymarket Square Massacre in Chicago, saw five workers and a young boy killed by militia bullets. Well-researched and written, the article serves as a reminder of the precious price paid by workers to gain the right to an eight-hour workday.

Honorable Mention: Local Lodge 2323 Contact, Mississauga, Ontario, CA, Paul Lefebvre, Bob Piercy, editors

Return of a Legend: Interesting depiction of work of volunteer union members who built a full-sized replica a Canadian Air Force icon, the Arrow, originally built in 1957. The story brings back the price and accomplishment of as many as 45,000 IAM members in the 1950s and celebrates the craftsmanship and dedication of the volunteers to completed the replica.

##### **Best Feature, District Lodges**

First Place: District 751, Seattle, WA; Aero Mechanic; Connie Kelliher, editor

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“Boeing ‘Gag Orders’ Hush Union Success”—Very informative topic, explaining to members how significant grievance and arbitration settlements are often shrouded by management demands for secrecy...Clearly written and well illustrated with original cartoon.

Second Place: District Lodge 837, Aero Facts 837, Hazelwood, MO, Thomas Pinski, editor

**Your Contract is Your Most Important Work Document**

From time-to-time, most union publications will take a look at the bargaining unit contract to give members a glimpse of the range of benefits secured by collective bargaining. Not often that the topic is done so well, with well-chosen words and strategic art work to drive home the message.

Third Place: District Lodge 190, Sparkplug, Oakland, CA, Debra Chaplan, editor

**IAM Members Maintain Moffett Field Systems**

Spotlighting a key IAM-represented unit at the NASA Ames Research Center, the author provides a brief history for context, and interviews with current personnel to illustrate the role that members play in the mission of the facility. Nice variety of photos, with captions that include comments from members.

#### **Best Layout & Design, Local Lodges**

First Place: Local Lodge 1781 Trade Winds, Burlingame, CA, Carl Finamore and Larry Wing, editors

Tabloid format stands out among its peers. Great color and compelling layout. Good mix of photography and clip art; effective attention to detail and judicious use of white space.

Second Place: Local Lodge 1660 The Tool, Lachine, Quebec, CN, Andre Charbonneau and Pierre Faucher, editors

Close attention to typography, boxes, screens, well-cropped photos and little touches like bold facing important elements are all very useful to readers. Plaudits.

Third Place: Local Lodge 700 Compass, Middletown, CT, Bob Brzozowski, Mel Tripp, editors

Good typography, white space, photos and art all add up to impact and readability. It's all here. Despite all that, some variety would liven up the overall package.

Honorable Mention: Local Lodge 733 Union Voice, Wichita, KS, Larry Wilson, editor.

Outstanding effort to communicate with members, the local mails hard copies of its newsletter as an insert in a larger publication, distributes it to the e-mail addresses of 10,000 members and recasts it in a second format for members to access on their website. Here is a local obviously intent on staying in touch with members and it shows.

Honorable Mention: W157 Woodworkers Report, Tacoma, WA, Diane Sordahl and Cheri Focht, editors

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Clever use of color, interesting and unusual typefaces that work and good clip art all help deliver the local's message.

Honorable Mention: Local Lodge 2323, Contact, Mississauga, Ontario, CN, Paul Lefebvre, Bob Piercy, editors

Simple, unadorned but consistent, solid and very readable. Good use of sub heds and white space.

Honorable Mention: Local Lodge 1725 Victory News, Charlotte, NC, Gary Winchester, editor

Brassy with big art and photos. Definitely readable and well-done.

Honorable Mention: Local Lodge 712 Journal Union, St. Laurent, Quebec, Gilles Samson, editor

Neat, terse, good white space.

### **Best Layout & Design, District Lodges**

First Place: Federal District 1, NFFE, the Federal Employee, Washington, DC, Cassie Kerner and Randy Erwin, editors

Polished, effective, colorful, with obvious attention to detail and nice touches—oversized folio lines, reverses, runarounds and more—impressive in every way.

Second Place: District Lodge 751, Seattle, Washington, Aero Mechanic, Connie Kelleher, editor

Well-organized, effective use of color, typography and layout. Plentiful photos depicting members in action. Art work is professional and boosts reader interest. Headlines provide a handy guide for readers. Emphasis on members invites interest.

Third Place: District Lodge 190, The Sparkplug, Oakland, CA, Debra Chaplan, editor  
Standard tabloid format, disciplined mix of typefaces, overall an inviting package.

Honorable Mention: District 837 Aero Facts 837, Hazelwood, MO, Thomas A. Pinski, editor

Oversized type, big headlines and somewhat gaudy color make Aero Facts difficult to ignore.

### **General Excellence—Local Lodges**

First Place: Local Lodge 1781 Trade Winds, Carl Finamore and Larry Wing, editors  
Big headlines, clever writing and solid editing. Overall impression is very solid and inviting to readers.

Second Place: Local Lodge 700 Compass, Middletown, CT, Bob Brzozowski, Mel Tripp, editors

Newsy, nice mix of hard news, human interest and factual matter. Focuses well on members and their interests.

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Third Place: Local Lodge 66 Badger Lodge News, Milwaukee, WI, Doug Curler, editor  
Easy to follow, good use of artwork, boxes, classic layout. Heavy on content.

### **General Excellence—District Lodges**

First Place: District Lodge 751, Aero Mechanic, Seattle, Washington; Connie Kelliher, editor

Aero Mechanic showcases the District Lodge 751 and its members well, provides salient information in digestible portions, informs, educates and motivates—all in a consistent, polished and professional package. Use of color, photographs, art and typography all support the key mission of this publication.

Second Place: Federal District 1 NFFE The Federal Employee, Washington, DC, Cassie Kerner and Randy Erwin, editors

High impact with color and layout drawing reader through from cover to cover. Writing is newsy and direct. Topic selection is well focused. All-in-all a very impressive package.

Third Place: District Lodge 190 Sparkplug, Oakland, CA, Debora Chaplan, editor  
Bold headlines, good focus on members and their views. Informative and well connected to the union and its objectives.

Honorable Mention: District Lodge 837, Aero Facts, Hazelwood, MO, Thomas Pinski, editor

Good mix of national and regional news. Addresses members interests as a strong advocate.

Honorable Mention: District Lodge 121, Beaver Dam, WI, Marla Ryan, editor  
Low budget but chock full of information. Well-written with a direct, no-nonsense style.

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**Judges for Website Competition—  
Tara Landis, art director, web design, KC Inc.  
Carol Gerson-Higgs, GH Design & Worthmore Corp.  
Anthony Petti, Inphonic Corp.**

### **A few notes on web sites:**

Over the years web design has evolved a great deal allowing the designer far more control over the end product as seen by the audience. However, ultimate control over what a website looks like is still not possible.

That being said, there are items a web designer/ editor can take into consideration that will make the end user's experience more enjoyable.

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Although there are varying statistics—somewhere between 60 and 80 percent of internet users are connecting via broadband. Simply said that means between 20 and 40 percent are still using a dial-up connection.

Lots of animation, graphics, etc slow the loading process and likely lose the viewer before they've even gotten onto your site. Not to say that animation doesn't have its place but it should be used appropriately to enhance the site's content and draw attention to important information not simply for animation's sake.

Permanently moving (looping) animations should rarely be included on a Web page. Research suggests that movement in our peripheral vision can dominate our attention. Research also indicates that moving text is harder to read than static text.

### **When to Use Animation:**

- Use animation to draw the audience's attention to a single element out of several, or to alert people to updated information.
- Use animation to indicate the function of a hot spot (link with in a graphic).
- Use animation to draw attention to changes from one state to another.
- Use animation to demonstrate navigation in a particular direction.
- Use animation to create icons for actions that can't be adequately expressed with a flat, static picture.

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### Ease of Use:

For most Web sites, ease of use comes down to letting people know what they should do and how to do it. As they move around your site, they should know where they are, where they need to go, and how to return to a "safe" home base. Your audience will move on if your content is not easy to locate or use.

A site's organizational structure should include your most important links at the top and bottom of each page not just on the home page.

A number of other features that are simple additions, but too often overlooked:

- Your street address, phone number, and e-mail.
- Directories, phone numbers and officers' lists.
- Explanation of your links—what the reader is likely to find when clicking (are they going to download a pdf, be taken off your web site to another, etc).
- Member photos are a great opportunity to show your members at work and at play. This is easy to do and a great readership builder (offer a smaller thumbnail size and allow the user to click on the photo to view a larger version. This will allow a visitor with a slower connection speed the choice of viewing the photo).
- It's also a good idea to think through the links you provide to other sites. Provide useful links and check frequently to see that they are working.
- Most important: update, update, update. Nothing kills readership better than a static page. You have plenty of information coming to you to employ as updates, make sure you take advantage of it.
- Content. What works for an entertainment page is not necessarily appropriate or welcome in an organizational page designed primarily to inform.

Thus, our selections tended to favor sites that presented information in straightforward, well-organized packages.

### Web Pages, General Excellence District Lodge:

First Place: Federal District Lodge 1 (NFFE), Washington, D.C., Cassie Kerner and Randy Erwin, web stewards, <http://www.nffe.org>

This site is up-to-date and the content is relevant to members of the NFFE. There is a consistent organizational structure throughout and the organizations contact information is available on all pages. Color choice, font and graphics render well and enhance the content throughout. The links are clearly identified on the home page indicating the reader can continue reading the news story on another page or move on to the next item. News items are dated to ensure the reader knows this is new content not something they've read the last time they visited the page. An aside on this design would be to shorten the

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sidebar column so as to limit the scrolling the reader must do to retrieve the contact information at the bottom of the page.

Second Place: District Lodge 751, Seattle, Washington, Ed Lutgen/Connie Kelliher, web stewards, <http://iam751.org>

Identification and description of the organization is clear and right up front. This site is full and busy, but easy to navigate. The web stewards have done a good job of providing unique information and support pages that should prove attractive to frequent visitors. Links are germane to the local and its members, a feature often neglected by union sites. It addresses family issues and member concerns and the material is prioritized according to reader interests. Upcoming events and calendar is right up front to provide easy access and frequent visits. Contracts and useful facts are easy to identify.

Third Place: District Lodge 60, Southgate, MI, Mark Ward, web steward, <http://www.districtlodge60.com>

An equally, if not better, designed site the only thing lacking here is the hierarchy of information on the home page. All judges felt national was given too much precedence over the district news. District victories although on the homepage should probably appear at the top of the page. Otherwise a beautifully designed site packed with information.

Honorable Mention: District Lodge 190, Oakland, CA, Jim Beno and Arlene Gamino, web stewards, <http://www.iamdistrict190.org>

This site has some unique features including a listing of officers on the home page and a hiring hall offering members access to job postings by union employers in their area. The photos of members and the “shop talk” feature show a commitment to the district’s membership as an important part of what they do.

### Best Layout/Design, District Lodge

First Place: District Lodge 60, Southgate, MI, Mark Ward, web steward, [www.districtlodge60.com](http://www.districtlodge60.com)

Beautiful design. DL 60 packs a ton of information into sleek design. Consistent look and feel throughout. Fonts and colors are well chosen, and the links are clearly defined. Good use of technology throughout. Although the site contains multimedia elements it loads quickly and does not overwhelm the viewer.

Second Place: Federal District Lodge 1, Washington, D.C., Cassie Kerner and Randy Erwin, web stewards, [www.nffe.org](http://www.nffe.org)

The NFFE site uses great color combinations. San serif fonts are easy to read and heads, subheads and section headings are easily identifiable. The photos are eye catching and well placed. This site uses a 3-column layout that creates an easy to read main section, a nice sidebar area, and a column dedicated to graphics and organizational links. Well done.

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Third Place: District Lodge 751, Seattle Washington, Connie Kelliher/ Ed Lutgen, web stewards, [www.yourpowerinside.com](http://www.yourpowerinside.com)

A special purpose site for organizing, this site has great impact and it is thoughtfully organized. It represents one of the most important uses of the internet as a tool. The material is well-presented and graphically pleasing. Although some of the pages are text-heavy, the material is well-written so as to inform an audience that is unfamiliar with unions, what they do and how they do it. The graphic rendering of the organizing process is especially effective.

### General Excellence Local Lodge

First Place: Local Lodge 698, Romulus, MI, Robin M. Ward, web steward, <http://www.iamlocal698.com>

This site is dynamic. The colors are bold and stand out among the other entries in this category. The site is consistent in its design throughout and contains a balance of local and national news. The site uses some multi-media elements but the technology isn't overwhelming to the user. The choices of technology only enhances the experience doesn't detract from the site. This site has a lot of vibrancy.

Second Place: Woodworkers 157, Tacoma, WA, Kelvin Farley and dCheri Focht, web stewards, <http://www.woodworkers157.org>

The Woodworkers 157 site is clean, and clear. The officers, contract jurisdiction and contact information are prominent on the home page along with a brief description of the history of the local. The site has a well-planned structure which opens up with sub links on the internal pages breaking the sections down clearly. This link structure also helps the viewer identify where they are within the site.

Third Place: Local Lodge 2003, Daleville, AL, Steve Crumb, Steve Roper and Pam Williams, web stewards, <http://www.iam2003.org>

An organized site that features the local's contracts and committees prominently. The upcoming events are listed both on the home page and repeated as a link from all of the sites internal pages. The navigational structure is consistent throughout and the important links are repeated on all pages. A few problems with the sub menu links appear on the site however the main links still direct you to a page containing the sub menus. The site contains some additional features that make-up for the broken links—an online contact form, a classifieds section and a contract proposal form just to name a few.

Honorable Mention: Local Lodge 1725, Charlotte, NC, William Hoogenhout, web steward, <http://www.machinists1725.org>

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Local Lodge 1725 has a user-friendly design that immediately provides the viewer with information on the local's pending elections. The organizational structure of the site is well thought out and repeats on all pages. The legislative section presents a clear mission statement, a definition of what the MNPL is and a host of useful information.

Honorable Mention: Local Lodge 1833, Bloomington, MN, Vicki Beebe, web steward, [www.localiam1833.org](http://www.localiam1833.org)

Up-to-date information is the key feature on this site. Links repeat at the top of every page and are clear and easy to understand. The local's information is prominent, a calendar of events keeps members informed and gallery of photos spotlight members at various events. This site clearly follows the theory of the medium is the message.

Honorable Mention: Local Lodge 1782, Burlingame, CA, Mike Mancini, web steward, <http://www.local1782.org>

Local Lodge 1782 has a theatrical site that is entertaining and informative. The site lists Shop Stewards, Executive Board and Local Lodge contact information prominently.

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### Best Layout/Design, Local Lodge:

First Place: Local Lodge 698, Romulus, MI, Robin M. Ward, web steward,  
[www.iamlocal698.com](http://www.iamlocal698.com)

This site is dramatic and eye catching. The color choices are bold for the computer screen but work surprisingly well. The design is reminiscent of print showing a use of CSS technology that allows the designer more control over the final outcome of the site's appearance.

Second Place: Woodworkers Local Lodge 157, Tacoma, WA, Kelvin Farley and Cdheri Focht, web stewards, <http://www.woodworkers157.org>

This site is clean and consistent throughout. The fonts and colors are easy on the eye and follow a clear style sheet delineating heads, subheads and body text. A clear hierarchy of information is apparent. Over all a nice site.

Third Place: Local Lodge 1782, Burlingame, CA, Mike Mancino, web steward, <http://www.local1782.org>

Lively and informative. The site is consistent in its design throughout. The editor's pull no punches style is refreshing and offbeat. The quirky graphics distinguish it from other sites without being off putting. A sense of humor may be required for viewing.

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