



OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE ORGANIZING DEPT OF THE IWW

Issue One: Summer 2009: odb@lists.iww.org

ORGANIZER'S NOTEBOOK

**IU 330 Organizing Committee
Up and running!!**

IU 330: Building Workers Organizing Committee Established

After contacting construction workers from around the union, a Fellow Worker from Atlanta, Georgia has led the effort to found the IU 330 Organizing Committee. Since the founding conference call, the committee has both begun a newsletter—"Hit the Bricks"—and established formal bylaws. As exciting 330 organizing is already underway in the union, we expect the 330 OC will have no trouble finding projects to dive into. Best of luck Fellow Workers!

Introducing the Organizer's Notebook

Welcome to the first issue of the *Organizer's Notebook*. The reason for the *Notebook's* existence is simple: there's lots of amazing organizing going on in the IWW, but due to the our union's size—we are, after all, an international union—many of us don't get to hear about all the inspirational campaigns currently underway. The majority of the information contained in the *Notebook* comes from the reports our Organizing Department Liaisons turn in to the ODB. It is my hope, as well as that of the Organizing Department, that the *Notebook* will not only inspire and encourage members in their own organizing efforts, but that it will lead to greater communication and coordination across the union.

Although the *Notebook* is intended as an internal document, every precaution has been taken to protect the identity of Fellow Workers who request it. The same level of security has been extended to non-public campaigns. If you feel we've overstepped either your personal privacy boundaries or those of your campaign, please make sure you let us know so the same mistake will not be Repeated in the future.

Before wrapping up, I'd like to take a minute to recognize Fellow Workers Chris Leary and Ildi Sipos for all their hard work in designing the layout of this snazzy newsletter. Fellow Worker J. Pierce should also be commended for the stylish cartoons he's generously allowed the *Notebook* to freely use. J's artwork can be found at <http://pierce-artwork.blogspot.com/>. Have a look, I promise it's worth your while. Also, allow me to express a very quick thanks to the IWW final edit committee. Nicely done Fellow Workers!

Finally, and as I'm sure our readers can imagine, the *Notebook* is a work in progress. As such, please do not hesitate to contact me directly with questions, feedback, or submissions: redandblack83@gmail.com

Tom Levy,
Editor, *Organizer's Notebook*
London, UK



So, what is the Organizing Department anyway?

The Organizing Department and its Board are relatively new bodies to the IWW. The OD is an international-level body within the IWW established for the purpose of assisting campaigns, branches, and individual IWW organizers. These bodies were created through a series of union-wide discussions culminating at the 2006 IWW Organizing Summit in Austin, TX and then finalized at the 2006 General Assembly in Oakland, CA. Once the Organizing Department was formally founded in 2007, the previously-established Organizer Training Committee was brought under the OD umbrella and a new Survey and Research Committee was formed.

The OD helps coordinate our organizing 'beyond the local level' and seeks to promote industrial and strategic organizing. It also provides a way for lessons to be passed on so that the IWW as a whole can start to replicate our best methods and learn from our mistakes.

Major developments that the OD has been a part of include: creating a Contact Coordinator position that now houses new organizing contacts under the OD instead of forcing the GST to be the IWW's general organizer; encouraging and helping guide the formation of

national organizing committees in Trucking, the Courier industry, and Construction; establishing Organizing Summits to facilitate face-to-face strategic discussions among IWW organizers; helping unify the IWW's efforts in foodstuff industries; and establishing a process of branch reporting where organizing campaigns can be linked with others doing similar work through our Organizing Department Liaisons and Industrial Contacts.

ODB Contacts

Todd H - menageatodd@gmail.com
 J Pierce - pierce1905@gmail.com, 971-275-6223
 Jeff P - jpila@iww.org
 Ant I - billybobince@hotmail.com
 MK - matthewkellard@gmail.com



Here are some key ODB terms that you'll see in this bulletin and what they mean:

Industrial Contact (IC): A volunteer who helps build member-to-member contact in a specific IU and who tries to get more members in their IU to be active in the union.

In the US, ICs can be reached at:

IU 330: Mike B. redbell3@gmail.com
 IU 460: Matt J. mjones1460@gmail.com
 IU 530: Pat B. industrialworker@gmail.com
 IU 540: Myke H. plowkwarrior@gmail.com

Organizing Committee (OC): A committee of IWW members who are coordinating organizing efforts in their workplace, their city, or their industry. Industrial organizing

committees are directly accountable to the ODB.

Organizing Department (OD): see "What is the OD?"

Organizing Department Board (ODB): The five-member board that oversees the activities of the OD. Three members of the board are directly elected by union-wide referendum and the other two stand as representatives of the SRC and OTC.

Organizing Department Liaison (ODL): Officer position elected by the Branch to report back and forth between the OD and the branch. In this capacity, an ODL both reports to the ODB and is responsible for reporting to his or her branch about OD activities. An ODL has access to the ODB e-

mail lists and, through it, maintains contact with other ODLs.

Organizer Training Committee (OTC): Responsible for coordinating Organizer Trainings (OTs) when IWW branches request to "get trained up."

Survey and Research Committee (SRC): A sub-committee of the OD responsible for conducting membership surveys as well as undertaking industrial and company research.

IWW In Your House Twin Cities GMB



Two Cities, Many Struggles

As the larger union has come to expect, the Twin Cities GMB is one of the most active branches in the union and has a number of promising projects currently underway...

IU 540: After a slow start, a "campaign mentor" has sat down with a group of taxi drivers who are interested in organizing with the IWW. The TC ODL described the meeting as "very positive" with new drivers stepping up to undertake organizing tasks.

IU 620: The IWW has created a "flying layoff squad" to combat the rash of layoffs affecting university workers. The IWW has an organized presence of over 20 workers at a particular Twin Cities university and has been attempting to combat the "craft union model" that has numerous trade unions all functioning

IU 560: The IWW has numerous members at an AT&T call center where the Communication Workers of America are set to strike if management refuses to move on a new contract. If the strike occurs, over 100,000 workers nationwide could be on the picket lines. Recognizing that CWA is woefully unprepared for a successful strike, our dual-carders are doing the on-the-ground organizing that is needed to make any industrial action successful. IWWs are educating their Fellow Workers on the principals of direct action and discussing escalation strategies if AT&T is not immediately moved by the threat of strike action.



IU 560 wobbles at AT&T rally behind the IWW banner in preparation for industrial action

IU 640: In what could hopefully become the next Starbucks campaign, the Twin Cities IWW has been organizing at a chain sandwich shop. Five to ten workers are consistently coming out to weekly meetings. Besides fighting the shop on legal grounds over a fired worker who was assaulted by his boss (the manager was also fired after a short work stoppage and support picket), the IWW has restarted a card-check campaign in the restaurant.



"Around the Union": A member of the Twin Cities GMB wrote the *Notebook* to inform us of an excellent organizing/outreach practice they've instituted at their branch: *"The Twin Cities GMB does this thing every GMB meeting called Around the Union. Each GMB meeting we hear an Around the Union report and someone volunteers to give the Around the Union report at the next meeting. For the report, the volunteer contacts people in other branches and asks them what's going on in their branch, then writes a short report on it to present at our meeting. Ideally people make contact by phone with the help of other IWW members who have Wobs' phone numbers, but sometimes people do it by email. There are three goals. One, to have some short organizing related thing at every meeting. Two, to get our branch hearing a report about something happening elsewhere. Three, making the contact needed to write the Around the Union provides an opportunity for member to member contact, so a little bit of relationship building."*

The *Organizer's Notebook* is happy to report numerous organizing successes coming out of Toronto.

Besides being 440, the To-
"reaffirm" that
IWW-affiliated
(IU 560) have
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beginning to
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workers precariously employed in the health care industry
ing out to the city's grassroots immigrants' organizations.

Finally, the branch organized a successful benefit for fired professor and IWW member Denis Rancourt. Over 110 students, workers, and community members turned out to defend both Professor Rancourt and academic freedom. The same group of Wobblies who planned the benefit maintain an organized presence at the University of Western Ontario. All dual-carders, they intend to mobilize their co-workers going into next year's contract negotiations.

Ontario Labour Board, covers 6 whom hold red Toronto GMB tract will be a setting, model can take to The IWW al-members in bike shops and pand that pres-near future.

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Gainesville, Florida

Organizing continues at a hip restaurant chain. With over 100 stores centered primarily in the Southeast US, the IWW has supporters at more than one shop, including a restaurant in North Carolina. Workers share many, many grievances and this has the potential to develop into a large and promising campaign.

Portland

As many of our readers already know, the IWW has a strong, organized presence in Portland. Wobblies in Portland are both sustaining existing shops and building new campaigns.

With a strong membership in IU 650, bargaining is currently underway in Portland Women's Crisis Line, Harry's Mother, and the Bradley-Angle House.

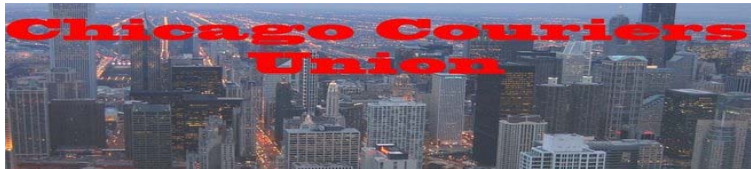
In IU 460/640, Portland Wobblies continue to be involved with and assist the Portland Restaurant Workers' Association. The Portland ODL had this to say about PRWA: *Primarily a support system for workers in the food service industry, the PRWA continues to grow in membership and requests for assistance from workers. Additionally, the PRWA holds monthly/bimonthly workshops for workers, mainly in the service industry.* Recently the PRWA held a workshop on sexual harassment in the workplace and has since been contacted by a worker who faces harassment and is looking to fight back.



How About Those IUs!

IU 460 (Foodstuff Workers Industrial Union)

Organizing continues amongst food workers. In the Twin Cities, organizers are hoping to branch out beyond the single shop they're most active in and into the city's many other food co-ops. In Portland, organizing is moving forward, but organizers expressed the need to sit down and develop a long-range strategy for the campaign. In an effort to improve industry-wide communication, 460 organizers are discussing the need for an industry-wide



IU 540 (Municipal Transportation Workers Industrial Union) (NorAm – the North American Organizing Committee):

In Chicago, the Chicago Couriers Union continues to grow. Over May Day the CCU held a bike messenger law clinic and celebrated the release of it's new blog, chicagocouriersunion.org.

In Los Angeles, bike and motorcycle messengers are coming together under the IWW banner to discuss both the importance of organizing and strategies for moving forward.

Taxi organizing continues in Miami, Minneapolis, and Cleveland. An ODB member has stepped up to facilitate increased contact between cab drivers in the three cities and a 540 "Cabbie Committee" may be in the works down the line. The same ODB member took part in cab driver actions in his home city and offered this report to the board: *I've been active helping a local cab association organize, and took part in 3 mass workplace actions.*

There was a brief work stoppage at the airport, a picket at the seaport, and a caravan through downtown. I am helping them develop organizers, and build an accountable and democratic structure. ...I have also assisted in fielding organizing contacts. This includes international contacts requesting information about joining as a group which I will forward to the GEB.



(From a recent IWW-supported work stoppage of taxi workers.)



Freight Truckers Organizing Committee

(FTOC IU 530): In one of our union's most exciting current campaigns, the *Organizer's Notebook* is happy to report that the FTOC is continuing in its innovative organizing. Issue 4 of *Truckers United* is available from <http://www.iww.org/en/node/4718> and new 530 groups have recently sprung up in Boston, Chicago, and the Bay Area.

The FTOC chair has even been in contact with a trucker in France who is interested in the IWW. The committee is also implementing GEB motion SB-07 which allows the FTOC—acting through “industrial delegate” J. Krpan—to collect and retain half the dues of any 530 member who so chooses.

ODB committee member J. Pierce has also submitted the following statement regarding the North Carolina/Virginia 530 campaign:

The truckers' campaign in North Carolina and Virginia has slowed to a trickle and seems to have ended for the most part. The FTOC still has approximately 4 solid members and a long list of contacts down there and we still have hopes to continue with the effort to build an IWW truckers' organization in NC and VA. Due to the unfortunate current victory of the 'pessimists' in that locale, it's tough to see much gain from our efforts. I think we did what we could and our IU 530 organizers, Sarah, Pat, Tom, and Billy, ought to be commended for their hard work and dedication. A considerable amount of time, energy, and money went into this campaign. It is tough to know what lessons came out of this campaign. The organizing effort is not 'over' in a permanent sense but the FTOC is wary of spending the same amount of money on it as has been expended already.

And in the last bit of news from IU 530, in May the FTOC has elected a new slate of committee members. They are as follows: Sarah Bender, Patrick B. (chair), Mike K., Jake M., and Drew Robertson. The names of said Fellow Workers are being sent to the ODB for approval. At the same meeting the committee nominated and approved next year's volunteer organizers and campaign co-ordinators: Mike K., Ted M., Bill B., Matt Z., Ted M., Sam M., Ben F., Drew Robertson, Sarah Bender, and Pat B. The FTOC can be reached at: freighttruckers@gmail.com





A Message from IU 530 Industrial Delegate J. Krpan

Taking a big step to help establish Industrial Union Branches in IU 530, the General Executive Board approved a proposal submitted by the Freight Truckers Organizing Committee that lets members working in the industry pay their union dues to the FTOC.

IWW truckers may choose to pay their dues through the IU 530 Industrial Delegate in whatever way is easiest for them, including the online payment service PayPal. IWWers who take advantage of this system help fund the FTOC budget and pay for expenses directly related to organizing in the trucking industry.

Currently, there aren't any IU 530 branches in the IWW. But by maintaining and building contacts in the industry and actively pursuing organizing leads, the FTOC is working to change that. Dues money helps pay the phone and travel expenses and to produce a quarterly newsletter. By undertaking such projects, the FTOC is not only building a sustainable and accountable structure, but is laying the groundwork for the eventual development of a fully-fledged Motor Transport Workers Industrial Union.

If you are working in the trucking industry and haven't already been contacted by a member of the FTOC, you can reach them at 224-353-7189 to learn more.



From the Survey and Research Committee

Defining the Purpose of the SRC

In April 2009 the Survey and Research Committee, a sub-group of the Organizing Department, released a number of proposals designed to clarify the SRC's purpose:

- 1) **A skills clearinghouse:** When union members contact the Organizing Department looking for particular skills, their needs (and contact info) will be passed along to the SRC. The SRC, which has been gathering such information through its many surveys and industrial research, will put them in contact with Wobblies who have the needed skills and experience. Included in the skills clearinghouse will be a list of lawyers who are willing to do (hopefully pro bono) legal support work for the IWW.
- 2) **Industrial Information Clearinghouse:** "Appoint the SRC as the central clearing house for information and research that has been compiled on companies, industries, etc." Once compiled and edited, the SRC will make such research easily and securely available for download by union members.
- 3) **Translation:** The SRC will become the main translating body for the union. The SRC will actively seek out multilingual Wobs and ensure all pertinent union documents are translated and up-to-date.
- 4) **Targeted Surveys:** "The SRC seeks authorization as a branch of the ODB to initiate, create and conduct occasional surveys in regards to specific organizational issues."
- 5) **Add one member to the SRC** (boosting it from 3 to 4) to share the increased workload that will result from the above proposals.

As per the SRC, the first four proposals are only for clarification purposes and do not need to be acted upon by the board. Proposal five is still being discussed and once a decision is made the results will be published in the *Notebook*.



From the OTC

During the first half of 2009, the OTC has been all over the map, literally. We have had our hands full coordinating trainings in:

- Lafayette, Indiana
- Edmonton, Alberta
- Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Dallas, Texas
- San Francisco, California
- Portland, Oregon
- McAllen, Texas
- Raleigh, North Carolina
- Albuquerque, New Mexico

We are especially excited to have been able to offer so many trainings in the southern US states, as that has been a region where we need to increase the number of branches and campaigns and develop our capacity as a union. For this reason, the southern states are a priority for the OTC. The Dallas training marked the third training we've put on in the state of Texas in two years and we hope that some synergy will develop between the emerging IWW groups there and in the broader southwest.

Most recently, our trainers headed to Cleveland, Ohio to train a group of taxi drivers who are in the midst of a promising industrial campaign in the city. The taxi drivers association there recently chose to affiliate to the IWW, and we were able to respond with a weekend-long training in a relatively short time frame. This campaign will need more than just a single training and we encourage members to support the drivers there in whatever way they can. Contact Colin Bossen for more details: cbossen@gmail.com

The personnel on the committee recently changed a bit, but we are up and running again and we are moving forward with the development of new curricula including a 102 training for shops and campaigns who have gone through the stages of a campaign up to the point of building a committee and going public. We hope to begin testing out this new weekend training before the end of the year.

As of this writing, we are coordinating upcoming trainings in Ottawa, Ontario; Portland, Oregon; and Grand Rapids, Michigan. We are also in the preliminary stages of planning another Training for Trainers for the Midwest.

Hope to see you at a training,

M.K.
Organizer Training Committee



Paint the town red.
Join the Industrial Workers
of the World!

Still want to hear more about organizing!?!?

As workers (and organizers!) it's important that we're constantly 'honing our skills.' The best way to do this, of course, is to get trained up and begin agitating in our workplaces, but it's still important that we take the time to learn from each other and reflect upon past successes (and failures). To this end, the *Organizer's Notebook* recommends Fellows Workers have a gander at the "Minority Report" and "Workers Power" columns that have appeared in the *Industrial Worker* over the past couple of years. Both columns, in their entirety, can be found online at:

Minority Report: <http://whatinthehell.blogsome.com/minority-report/>

Workers Power: <http://whatinthehell.blogsome.com/workers-power-columns/>

Have Your Say!

Have an uplifting organizing experience? Tips or stories you'd like to share with your Fellow Workers? The *Notebook* encourages contributions, so go on, have your say...

E-mail any submissions (250 words or less, please) to:

redandblack83@gmail.com





If you're interested in learning more about the exciting campaigns described here, the Organizer's Notebook encourages our readers to contact Fellow Workers directly at the branch level. Unfortunately we didn't include contact information because we were unable to reach branch contacts in time to ask their permission, but this will be corrected in future issues. If you need help reaching a particular branch, write to a member of the ODB.

And finally...

The *Organizer's Notebook* is sad to report that Organizer Training Committee member and dedicated Wobbly Nate H. is stepping down from the committee. Nate is preparing for the arrival of his first baby (congrats Fellow Worker!!).

The ODB has appointed John B. take his place.

Nate, your hard work and dedication will be missed, but we have no doubt you'll continue to be an important and inspirational member of the One Big Union.

ORGANIZER'S NOTEBOOK

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